

# ANGLO- SOVIET JOURNAL

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Organ of the Society for Cultural Relations with the USSR

# TRADE WITH THE SOVIET UNION

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THE speech delivered at the International Economic Conference in Moscow on April 5 by Mr. Nesterov, President of the USSR Chamber of Commerce, requires the closest attention of all interested in the social and economic development of the USSR, no less than of those for whom trade between the two countries is the main concern. From both points of view, there are five passages in the speech which may be examined with special profit.

1. Soviet trading organisations, he said, were willing to increase their business with foreign countries "so long as these relations are based upon mutual advantage and strict observance of contractual obligations. . . . The economic development of the Soviet Union is based upon a continually expanding home market and a steady increase in the purchasing capacity of its population. . . . The USSR possesses everything needed for its economic advancement and for the expansion of trade with foreign countries."

These statements can be backed with solid facts. Mr. Nesterov himself put Soviet foreign trade at present as reaching eighteen milliard roubles a year, which, in comparable prices, was "roughly three times as great as before the war". But in 1949 its physical volume was already double the pre-war figure (*Problems of Economics*, March 1952). Even allowing for price changes, this implies an extraordinarily rapid rate of expansion. Again, the annual returns of the Central Statistical Administration do in fact show an expanding home market, with a total increase in retail trade (after price-cuts the previous March, in each case) of 20 per cent in 1949, 30 per cent in 1950 and 15 per cent in 1951. In the first quarter of 1952, even before this year's price-cut, the volume of retail trade increased by a further 11 per cent over the corresponding quarter of 1951.

2. Given serious intentions on the part of foreign business groups to extend trade with the USSR, the Soviet commercial organisations "could purchase in the countries of Western Europe, the Americas, South-East Asia, the Middle East, Africa and Australia commodities which they customarily export, and sell them Soviet commodities in which they are interested, in quantities which would raise the Soviet Union's trade with these countries in the next two or three years to 30,000 or 40,000 million roubles, or to 10,000 or 15,000 million roubles a year, compared with the maximum post-war volume of approximately 5,000 million roubles in 1948".

Bearing in mind that in 1949 only one-third of the Soviet Union's foreign trade had been with these countries (*Izvestia*, 21.12.49)—a proportion which is hardly likely to have increased since then—this would mean an increase of 67-150 per cent on 1952: again an unprecedented rate of progress for such a short period. The increase of employment in the countries concerned, as a result of Soviet purchases, would be from 1½-2 million people (it was subsequently stated, on the basis of Soviet economists' calculations, that this included nearly 200,000 in the United Kingdom).

3. Mr. Nesterov indicated an important change in the make-up of this trade programme, "in contradistinction to previous years". The Soviet Union would be willing to purchase consumer goods from West European firms—he specified textiles, leather goods, food products, in particular—as well as raw materials (including those required for the manufacture of consumer goods) and metals, to a total value of 8,000-12,000 million roubles. Purchases of machinery, industrial equipment, merchant ships and fishing vessels would amount to 7,000-10,000 million roubles. Thus capital goods would represent from 25-30 per cent of Soviet imports, instead of at least half as before 1939.

What is the basis for this remarkable change ? It is primarily the immense rate at which Soviet industry has recovered : industrial output stood in 1951 at double the 1940 level, after falling to barely three-quarters of that level in 1945, in consequence of war destruction. In fact, it has enabled the Soviet Union in recent years itself to export to the People's Democracies equipment for the iron and steel, mining, engineering, electric power, oil, chemical and other industries (*Vneshnaya Torgovlia*, 1952, 2).

But furthermore, the Soviet people themselves—in consequence of expanding production in every field—have become larger and more discriminating purchasers of consumer goods. To take manufactures alone, they bought more cottons, woollens and footwear in 1949 than before the war—when they were consuming far more of these goods per head than in 1913 : in 1950 the sales of textiles went up by 35 per cent and of footwear by nearly 50 per cent ; in 1951 there was a further increase of 10-20 per cent. Sales of furniture went up by 38 per cent in 1949, by another 38 per cent in 1950, and by 50 per cent in 1951 : in the same years sales of radio sets increased by 50 per cent, 26 per cent and 26 per cent respectively. Here it is the rate of expansion, keeping pace with the rate of expansion of industrial and agricultural earnings, that is of prime significance.

4. Addressing himself to British business men, Mr. Nesterov reminded them of the cereals, timber, oil and other products which they used to buy from the USSR, and of the machinery and raw materials which the Soviet Union bought from them (British exports and re-exports to the USSR were £19.5 million in 1937, £8.6 million in 1949, and £3.6 million in 1951—the lowest figure since thirty years before, when Anglo-Soviet trade was just beginning). Mr. Nesterov said that “ given a desire on the part of British business interests to extend commerce with the USSR ” trade could be brought back to the maximum pre-war figure of 1937 (£227 million in present prices)—not only by increasing trade in the goods previously exchanged, but also by increased Soviet purchases of fabrics, spices, herrings, etc.

Moreover, Mr. Nesterov emphasised, elsewhere in his speech, that the Soviet trade organisations would be prepared to “ receive payment for goods in local currencies and spend them in the countries concerned ”.

5. At the same time, a considerable section of his address, turned towards other countries, showed that Britain will have serious competitors in the Soviet market. The USSR offered to buy textiles from France, Italy and Japan ; engineering products from the same countries and also from Holland, Belgium and Western Germany ; chemicals from France, Italy and Holland ; and so forth. The unanimous decision of the Bonn Parliament after the conference to take immediate steps for the expansion of trade with the USSR showed that one important industrial country has taken Mr. Nesterov's speech seriously.

It is in Britain's own interests not to ignore it.

ANDREW ROTHSTEIN

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NOTE: The work by A. Makarenko mentioned on p. 7 of our Spring issue (Vol. XIII, No. 1) as “ Teacher's Epic ” is usually known here as “ The Road to Life.” (See review on p. 48 of this issue.)



# **NIKOLAI GOGOL**

**1809-1852**

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## **THE CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS IN MOSCOW**

**James Aldridge**



THOUGH the recent commemoration for Gogol in Moscow was set on the hundredth anniversary of his death, the Russians turned the occasion into a most remarkably cheerful celebration of his life, his works, his struggle, and (to their way of thinking) his ultimate success as a hopeful man.

I was one of an international delegation of writers invited to attend these celebrations, and though our delegation took part in many of the special occasions (two weeks of them), we really only saw a fraction of the enormous number of activities commemorating Gogol and his works.

Every school in the Soviet Union, for instance, had exhibitions of his work, readings, commentaries on his life; the wireless was busy with Gogol almost every day; new editions of his books were printed; new productions of his plays were put on.

For us the official celebration began with the unveiling of a new statue in the heart of Moscow, and the renaming of a boulevard after Gogol. This, in itself, was something of a key to the rest of the celebrations, because their new portraits of Gogol show him as a man of laughter: or at least as a man of the wry, human smile.

Almost every reference to Gogol that we heard after this insisted on his ultimate optimism, denying that he was a man of despair. The fact that his last days were dark and tragic is of less importance to Soviet interpretation than the fact that his work is true satire, true fun at the expense of the worst and most hypocritical aspects of the rising bourgeoisie in Russia.

In the dedication of a new bust over his grave in the famous Novo-Device cemetery outside Moscow, this same emphasis was made, and this bust too was one of a keen-eyed man.

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Of course the most important occasion during the celebrations was the ceremony in the Bolshoi Theatre, when each of the foreign delegates spoke for a few minutes in tribute to Gogol. Soviet speakers gave fuller tributes, again re-emphasising his wit and satire as against the gloomy side of him. After the speeches there was a concert in which fragments from *Dead Souls* were performed, as well as one act of *The Government Inspector* (which we all saw a few days later at the Maly Theatre in its magnificent new production). Songs and ballet from such works as *Taras Bulba* and *Christmas Eve*, based on Gogol's works, were also performed at the Bolshoi concert, which lasted until midnight.

After a few days in Moscow, the whole international delegation went to Leningrad for four days. Here we saw the Gogol Museum, which is a remarkable exhibition of his works, illustrations to his works, and a collection of contemporary portraits of Gogol and the men who knew him. Here I was given a copy of a new book listing every known portrait of Gogol in existence, including those abroad. The interesting thing about the contemporary portraiture of Gogol is the support it gives to their new vision of him as a bright-eyed and happy-looking man.

Naturally we did not spend all our time as a delegation looking at Gogol exhibits; in fact most of our time was devoted to seeing other aspects of Soviet life. In Leningrad, for instance, we spent almost a whole day in the Hermitage Museum, the largest and richest (and most crowded) museum I have ever seen in my life. Its wealth of art, from primitive to Greek to Renaissance to modern, is beyond expression.

Yet though we touched many of these other aspects of Soviet life, we always seemed to meet Gogol in them. In the House of Children's Books in Moscow, for instance, which we went to see for its own sake, there was an exhibition of illustrations from Gogol's works done by the children themselves. We saw something similar in the Palace of Pioneers in Leningrad, and also in the House of Culture, its adult equivalent as a place for social recreation.

The makeup of our delegation was indicative of Gogol's world position as a writer (of which the Russians are very proud), and all the members reported on his longstanding popularity in their own languages. Among us were many writers of renown, such as Eluard of France and Din-Lin of China (who had the pleasure of waking up one morning in Moscow to read that she had won a Stalin prize for literature). Many other delegates could not reach Moscow because of travel or political difficulties, including delegates from Italy and other western European countries.

I have not the space, nor is it the intention of this article, to give any larger picture of the Soviet Union; but in the emphasis on the humanity and culture of Gogol, and on his heritage, there is something symptomatic of everything else we found in the Soviet Union. There, humanity is prized above all else; culture is preached as the highest aim and the necessity of all men; and peace is certainly their first instruction in human affairs, not only in literature and the arts, but in the very essence of their hopes for the rich future they foresee for their Soviet society.



# GOGOL YESTERDAY AND TODAY

**T. Shebunina**



IT IS no small achievement for a writer, and particularly for a satirist, to survive the test of a century. Laurels may fade or be plucked by irreverent hands.\* But the laurels of Gogol, a hundred years after his death, are still vigorously green.

During these hundred years such vast changes have taken place in Russia that the evolution of outlook and points of view could well have brought a radical revision of the value of Gogol's work. Whatever reevaluation there has been, however, has only reasserted and enhanced his reputation. The commemoration of the centenary of Gogol's death now taking place in the Soviet Union—on the stage, over the radio, and by new issues of his books in the many languages of the Union—are not mere official tributes to past glory, as lifeless as the beaded wreaths in French cemeteries. These tributes are as living as the calls of a delighted audience for the author.

Gogol himself underwent many changes, not only in the natural process of his development as a writer, but also as a result of the complexity of his nature. Starting as a light-hearted teller of entertaining stories, he went on to give a gallery of lifelike portraits of types of early nineteenth-century Russia, and later on a complete picture of Russian provincial life. Gradually the good-humoured irony of his earlier works sharpened into satire, and the more bitterly he inveighed against the evils of his day, the more he became the prey of hopeless pessimism. When he tried to react by seeking to change his sarcastic attitude and create worthy characters, inspiration seems to have left him. We shall never know what it was—a brainstorm, or the realisation of a waning of his creative power—that drove him to burn the second part of his *Dead Souls*, which was to have been, if not *Paradiso*, at least a *Purgatorio* to the *Inferno* of the first part.

Mysticism, in which Gogol sought refuge from disillusion and inward conflict, led him to a kind of morbid messianism and to the acceptance of the evils he had once scourged, a helpless "so it has always been and so it always will be". His *Correspondence with Friends* came as a painful surprise to progressive Russian circles. Their feelings were expressed by Belinsky, the greatest representative of progressive Russian thought of the time, in his famous letter, and the more strongly because he could not accept such weakness in the man who "by his highly artistic, deeply truthful works had so powerfully helped Russia to understand herself by letting her see herself as in a mirror". In these last years of his life Gogol was indeed, in the words of the poet Valery Brussov, "burnt to ashes".

Yet time has swept away the memory of this unhappy period. No one reads the *Letters* any more. They are so much dead wood, which can be of interest only to psycho-analysts.

Everything that was truly valuable and original in Gogol has survived undimmed. The first memorial statue put up to him in Moscow at the beginning of this century shows the Gogol of the last period, drooping under the heavy folds of his cloak as though in sombre meditation over the destruction of his *Dead Souls*. It was much criticised even at the time as stressing too much the "tears" and leaving out the "laughter". The new monument unveiled the other day in Moscow shows Gogol in his true light. He stands erect, the inspired writer of his best days, the author of brilliant and scathing satires, the enemy of all that life holds of stupid, cruel and mean.

Abroad Gogol is known mainly if not exclusively as the author of *Dead Souls*. Recent attempts here to stage and to broadcast his *Government Inspector*

\*We had a striking example of this during the recent celebrations of the 150th anniversary of the birth of Victor Hugo, when several well-known French authors coolly declared that he had lost all meaning.



have been, to say the least, unhappy. Plays, like music, have their rhythm and their tempo. The crippling suffered by Gogol's play at the hands of its British producers reminds one of that suffered only too often by Russian music. To present it as a burlesque was to rob it of its deeper meaning.

In the eyes of the Russians Gogol has a number of merits besides that of being the traditional founder of the realistic Russian novel. There are first of all his Ukrainian tales. They brought him fame overnight. Like a fresh spring they flowed out to swell the broad stream of Russian literature, for although Gogol was a Ukrainian by birth, he was by adoption a pan-Russian. In these tales he opened out a new world of romantic southerners and stout-hearted cossacks, of weird legends and village idylls, of devils and witches and popular Ukrainian humour. The tales already bear the stamp of his personality, that inimitable gift of his to blend realistic details with unbounded fantasy: the spirit of a drowned girl rewards the hero in *May Night* with a most businesslike letter in the hand of the local Commissioner; or again, the mother of one of his heroes, in *The Christmas Slippers*, who is a witch, is accepted as such as naturally as her son is accepted as a blacksmith.

Then, in a more serious vein, come the pictures of St. Petersburg life with its deadening bureaucratic officialdom and the tragedies of small people. Here sheer fun and fancy begin to give way to the famous "laughter through tears", and in *The Overcoat* there appears that deep strain of pity for the helpless and oppressed which from then onwards flows so strongly through the whole of Russian literature.

When he was planning his *Government Inspector*, Gogol said that he intended "to put together and deride all that is bad in Russia, all the evils that are perpetrated in those places where the utmost rectitude is required of man". He produced a masterpiece that became and has remained to this day a favourite with the ever-widening circle of Russian theatre-goers. The reason for the undying success of the play is not only its entertaining action and irresistible fun. Its appeal is a deeper one, for Gogol's satire stretches far beyond its original setting in space and time. Braggart Khlestakovs and obsequious Dmukhanovskys are still to be found in all walks of life and under many different skies.

In *Dead Souls* Gogol's satire reaches its highest level. The characters, clothed in Russian garb, acquire the dimensions of world types as the personification of misers, wasters, unscrupulous businessmen, empty dreamers. They are so vividly alive that their names have become, as common designations, part and parcel of idiomatic Russian, just as the names of some characters by Dickens and Molière have been incorporated in their respective languages.

The attitude towards Gogol in Russia today was summed up in masterly fashion by Professor V. V. Yermilov at the unveiling of Gogol's new monument. In his speech he showed with what unerring sharpness the scalpel of Gogol's satire cuts into the diseased flesh of humanity. Let him speak for himself: "Chichikov [the hero of *Dead Souls*] with his suppleness, his easy way of adjusting himself, has a wonderful gift of finding suitable euphemisms for the most revolting circumstances and persons. As he acquaints himself with the miser Plyushkin's 'way of life', Chichikov begins at once to cast about for such expressions as will decently describe this realm of destitution, hunger and death. '... he realised that the words *virtue* and *rare qualities of the heart* could be successfully replaced by the words *economy* and *order*; so, readjusting his speech accordingly, he said that what he had heard about Plyushkin's economy and remarkable administration of his estates had made him regard it as a duty to introduce himself and pay his respects.' Is it not exactly thus", Yermilov goes on to ask, "that modern advocates of the society of exploiters invent such terms as 'the new order' or some particular 'way of life' for regimes still more monstrous than that of Plyushkin?"

Professor Yermilov applies Gogol's words "Creation is greater than destruction" to the contrast between the vast work of development and construction carried on in the USSR and the efforts of the forces of destruction threatening the peace of the world. Could Gogol have imagined any greater recognition than that of finding himself, a century later, so closely associated with the life and work of his countrymen?

# ONE OF THE GREATEST NAMES IN OUR LITERATURE

V. V. Yermilov



THE name of Gogol is one of the greatest in the illustrious literature of Russia. It is loved and honoured by all progressive mankind. There is not a corner of our vast country where the works of Gogol are not known and loved. His name is spoken with reverence not only by Russians but by all the many nationalities in our country to whom Soviet power has given the opportunity to read Gogol in their native tongue.

Gogol did most of his writing during the thirties and forties of the nineteenth century. The criterion by which any thinker, public figure, publicist or writer of that time must be judged is whether his activities supported or opposed the feudal serf order then prevailing. The work of Gogol, in which the revolutionary democrat Belinsky perceived an explosive force capable of shaking serfdom to its very foundations, was akin in spirit to all the progressive forces in Russia at that time.

Gogol was not by conviction a revolutionary democrat. His outlook was full of contradictions; in many respects his views were advanced and progressive, but in many they were narrow, backward and patriarchal. Gogol was far from accepting any political programme, but his works gave impassioned expression to the suffering of the peasants and the wrath of the people. Gogol's strength lay in his ardent patriotism, his profound democracy, the national character of all his thinking and feeling, his lofty morality and uncompromising truthfulness. Because of these qualities, combined with a passionate hatred for all that kept Russia from surging ahead, Gogol's creative work, with all its wealth of character portrayal, was directed not against individual vices but against the social order as a whole, against the very foundations of the feudal and serf regime.

The young Gogol's only thought was to serve his country selflessly in some noble, elevated sphere. Very early in life he became convinced that his fate and his significance as an individual were inextricably bound up with the fate and the significance of Russia. This conviction was ever with him, was vitally important to him, and formed indeed the *leitmotiv* of his entire life. In his early years he had no thought of devoting himself to literature, though he did try out his pen.

It was with such exalted ideas that Gogol arrived in St. Petersburg. He went from one state department to another, trying to find a situation in any of them and despairing of doing so; he tried to go on the stage, but was rejected here too. After endless applications and untold humiliations, he at last entered the civil service, only to be bitterly disappointed. He was revolted by it.

Thus at the very outset of his independent life Gogol came hard up against the contradiction between his dreams of a lofty calling and the crude reality of serving in one of the government departments. The contradiction was shocking. So bitter a disappointment might have broken another youthful dreamer, stunned at such an early age by the shattering of his dreams. What saved Gogol? The obvious answer would be that he was saved by his genius. He was able to turn to teaching until he gave himself up once and for all to literature. This answer is correct but incomplete. The genius of Gogol was expressed in the fact that his mind turned for sustenance to the *people*, an unfailing source of strength. This fact alone placed his work in the very centre of the thoughts, interests and anxieties of his time.

The youthful Gogol, in the bitterness of his disappointment, flung himself from the prison cell of the government department into the ocean of the people's life.

Having chosen this path, Gogol was discovered, inspired and saved from loneliness by Pushkin. In the summer of 1831 Gogol, then tutoring in an aristocratic family not far from Tsarskoye Selo [now renamed Pushkin], was introduced to Pushkin as a young writer of great promise, and the two men quickly became friends.

The friendship between Pushkin and Gogol forms one of the finest and most inspiring pages in the history of Russian literature. "Pushkin was the first to understand and appreciate Gogol's talent", wrote Belinsky. "Pushkin's influence on Gogol is seen first and foremost in the latter's devotion to the people . . ." It was this devotion to the people that attracted Pushkin and Gogol to each other. Pushkin strengthened the young writer's faith in himself and the rightness of the path he had chosen. The brightest spot in Gogol's life was his friendship with Pushkin and his memory of this friendship in later years.

Following Pushkin's precepts, Gogol ploughed the popular element deeper into Russian literature, making it more immediate, more accessible, and bringing literature into more direct contact with the life, language, thoughts and feelings of the people. It was under Pushkin's influence that Gogol came to this conclusion: "If people are to laugh, let them laugh hard and at things worth laughing at."

At the very outset the new writer declared that it was the aim and purpose of his work to reflect the art and life of the people. The preface to *Evenings on A Farm Near Dikanka* asserts that true poetry, and indeed true living, exists only among the people, and that incalculable riches are to be found in the world of folk poetry and folk life. In this book, based on Ukrainian tales and folklore, realistic descriptions are combined with the fanciful and the faery, combined to form one poetic whole, in which Gogol gives expression to his dreams of strong, wholehearted, simple people, capable of giving free play to their natural emotions. He not only wrote about the *muzhik*, not only developed a literary language based on folk language, but went farther still: he wrote in the person of the *muzhik*.

Pushkin wrote, on receiving a copy of the book in September 1831: "I am delighted. . . . It is all so unique in our literature that I still can't believe it. They tell me the compositors split their sides laughing . . . I congratulate the public on receiving a truly humorous book, and the author has my very best wishes for the future. . . . For heaven's sake stand up for him if the journalists attack him, as is their wont, for using words that are not respectable or adopting an improper tone and so forth . . ."

Like Pushkin, Belinsky at once appreciated what a poetic innovation the *Evenings* was, and explained to the Russian reading public the full significance of Gogol's work. He was enraptured by these "poetic sketches", and said that Gogol's poetry was as fresh and intoxicating as love's first kiss.

Love for simple people is marked in another of Gogol's immortal works, *Taras Bulba*, a book on a more imposing scale, with which Gogol became the originator of a new genre, the modern historical epic, distinguished from the ancient heroic epic mainly by the influence of the novel with its emphasis on the fate of individuals. This genre has been further developed by the literature of socialist realism. In the person of Taras Bulba, Gogol created a generalised type of Ukrainian national hero. All the events portrayed in the book are typical of the entire period of the struggle for the emancipation of the Ukraine. Belinsky rightly called *Taras Bulba* a great book. In it we find depth and integrity of all emotions; a simple, openhearted faith in people; an utter abandon, the ability to give oneself up heart and soul to merrymaking, to vengeance, to battle, to labour; a sweeping, gargantuan scale of emotion. Gogol's soul was filled with the greatness and heroism of simple people, with the beauty and poetry of their living. This was the song that never died within him, this was the dream he lived by. "*Taras Bulba*", wrote Belinsky, "is an episode from the great epic that is the life of this people. If it is possible to write a Homeric epic in our times, here is its model, its ideal, its prototype." With the world within him as a criterion, Gogol judged the world about him.

It is significant that Gogol's work on the second edition of *Taras Bulba*, which made it a work of genius, was done while he was writing *Dead Souls*.

The contrast between these two superb epics is striking. The first is yea-saying, the second nay-saying. The characters in the first are majestic, in the second petty. The author loves his characters in the first, despises them in the second. In spite of these contrasts, the epics are akin in spirit.

The contrast that Gogol had found between his youthful ideals and crude reality was not peculiar to himself. It was only one expression of the historical contrast between the greatness of the Russian people and the social and political backwardness of Russia at the time. It was necessary that a writer should be born who, in the grief and anguish of his heart, would reveal this contrast in all its harshness and thereby help to eliminate it by strengthening and augmenting the forces fighting for progress.

Gogol was that writer. A peculiarity of his artistic genius was that *he told the tragedy of his times in the language of comedy*. To be able to laugh at one's enemies indicates moral superiority, a consciousness of one's own strength. Gogol's laughter was a triumphant confirmation of Russia's spiritual maturity. "Laughter", wrote Herzen, "is one of the strongest weapons that can be directed against what has outlived its time but still hangs on, God only knows why, an imposing ruin preventing the growth of the new. . . . And if the god Apis is laughed at, it is equivalent to unfrocking him and returning him to the herd of ordinary bulls." This task was performed by the iconoclastic works of Gogol.

In his famous St. Petersburg stories (*Nevsky Prospect*, *The Carriage*, *The Nose*, *The Overcoat*, and others) Gogol ruthlessly strips scoundrels and nonentities of their human visages. In ridiculing and exposing representatives of "high society", Gogol brought all the force of his great poetic talent to the defence of the scorned and despised "little" man. *The Overcoat*, a humane and impassioned protest, was a statement of the fundamental principles of Russian early nineteenth-century humanism.

*The Government Inspector*, based on the hackneyed mistaken-identity situation, was only too well understood by reactionaries with the wit to comprehend it. It was not for nothing that the appearance of this play met with such hostility in ruling circles. In the person of the "little mayor" from the "little town", Gogol created a portrait of *reactionaries in general*. The character portrayals were important generalisations.

The works of Gogol supplied material from which were developed the powerful principles of Russian revolutionary-democratic aesthetics, including Chernishevsky's dictum that works of art *sit in judgment on reality*. That there is a sharply defined borderline between good and evil is an immortal tenet of Russian literature, and one which is confirmed with particular force in the works of Gogol, an artist strong to love and strong to hate.

The first volume of *Dead Souls* appeared in 1842. Its leading character, Chichikov, exemplifies most fully the contrast between the outward seemliness and inner hideousness of representatives of the privileged classes that runs through all Gogol's work. You cannot read *Dead Souls* without laughing, but mingled with that laughter are tears of dismay. While remaining a comedy, it is a tragedy too, and the secret of the constant blending of the one with the other is the secret of Gogol's artistry.

The devilish power of money and the moneyed man frightened Gogol more and more, and he did not know what could offset them, where to seek protection against them. The limitations of his outlook prevented him from perceiving the growth of the new progressive democratic forces opposing the horrible power of money and the man of means. The growing realisation that he could not tell what was to be done in the circumstances filled him with dismay. The chapters of the second part of *Dead Souls* that escaped destruction show that Gogol as it were had weighed one by one all the forces he thought might be capable of leading Russia forward. But for Gogol the man of means was too great an enemy. *Money has no smell*, says the Roman proverb. But in an exploiting society money smells of blood. For Gogol it smelled of the blood of wantonly destroyed people.

Seeing nothing in the future capable of opposing the ferocious power of the moneyed man, there was nothing left for him but to idealise the past. It is easy to see that this could not but have a reactionary outcome.

With Pushkin's death Gogol was left in mental solitude, a solitude as natural as it was tragic. Had he formed ties in the one camp capable of appreciating and loving him truly as man and artist—as Belinsky loved him—it would have been avoided. But as it was, all his acquaintanceships and ties lay in the sphere to which he was either a hostile alien or, as an artist, incomprehensible or at best only half understood. The sad result was his *Selected Passages From Correspondence With Friends*, which drew from Belinsky the famous *Letter to Gogol*, which Lenin described as “one of the finest works of the uncensored democratic press”. “I loved you”, wrote Belinsky, “with all the passion with which a man bound by ties of blood to his native country can love its hope, its honour, its glory, one of its great leaders on its path of consciousness, development and progress.” But now he severely censured Gogol, pouring out his profound indignation with forceful sincerity, and contrasting the true Gogol, the Gogol he loved, to the false Gogol.

When the intact chapters of the second part of *Dead Souls* were published, three years after Gogol's death, Nekrasov wrote to Turgenev: “It hurts to think that some incidental flaws prevent many from appreciating this man who did not write what was most likely to please, nor even what came easiest to his talent, but tried to write what he considered of the greatest benefit to his country. He perished in the struggle, and perhaps in many respects he abused his talent, but what self-sacrifice! He was a noble person, the most humane person in the Russian world; we can only wish that the young writers in Russia may follow in his footsteps.”

“Gogol”, wrote Chernishevsky, “told us who we are, what we lack, what we should aspire to, what to hate and what to love.”

Gogol's immortal service to mankind lies in his having been the first author in world literature to reveal so profoundly, and in so forceful, true and consummately artistic a form, the criminality of the power of dead souls over the living; in his having appealed to humanity to persevere in the search for ways of overcoming the base and despicable power of the inhuman man of means. He exposed the falsity and inhumanity of the social relations in which the living human soul is valued “no more than a boiled turnip”. The names of his characters have long been terms of opprobrium for the unpleasant traits fostered by a social system based on class antagonism and the morality derived from private property relations.

Gogol's service to his country and to all mankind is beyond estimation. His brilliant works help every people in the struggle for peace and happiness on earth. His memory is honoured in every country by all those who cherish progress, peace and creative endeavour.

—Abridged from VOKS Information Service, March 1952.





# A VERSATILE GENIUS

**M. Rylsky**



A HUNDRED years is a long time. This particular hundred years has seen many changes on our planet. Events of vast significance have taken place. As the peoples of the earth advance into the future, they turn to the books written by great men as a wellspring of wisdom, as a torch to guide them on their way. Gogol's greatness, the place he won for himself in world literature, are due to the fact that he devoted his life to the struggle for truth, human happiness, and the triumph of reason and justice.

In his very first works Gogol showed a lofty and ardent love for man that immediately won the sympathy of his readers. He showed to many peoples the inner life of the Russian, filled with rare beauty and bitter strife, and acquainted readers in all countries with the vast panorama of Russian life, reflecting in his books the colossal strength latent in the Russian people, the most notable aspects of their character, and their firm faith in a brighter future.

When Gogol's name is mentioned people usually smile at the recollection of characters from his books. Gogol's laughter staggered the Russia of his time. It was an all-powerful laughter that exposed the evils that were robbing man of his right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. He often explained that his laughter was a weapon aimed at human vices and at a purposeless brutish existence. Belinsky and Chernishevsky pointed out that all the evils against which Gogol directed his annihilating satire had their roots in the social and political structure of the time.

The carefree humour of his early stories in *Evenings on a Farm near Dikanka* reveals the poetry of the gay and colourful life of simple people, confirming in amusing tales the right of simple folk everywhere to enjoy life. But in *The Government Inspector* and *Dead Souls* his laughter becomes accusing and angry, a sentence passed by a judge defending the sound and wholesome against the rotten and decayed.

In the many languages of the world people of our own day read how *Taras Bulba*, the Ukrainian hero, fought for his country. I turn to this book again and again, to be astounded each time that it was written so long ago; so pertinent is its message in our own time that it seems it must have been written today. There lies the power of Gogol's realism. He was a great poet of universal truth, a poet of humanism.

His versatile genius was in harmony with the wide range of his interests. He loved the theatre and described theatregoing as his "greatest pleasure". In his early years in St. Petersburg he had even aspired to go on the stage. Painting attracted him just as keenly, but his interests were not confined to the arts. He gave a great deal of time and energy to the study of history also, and in 1834-5 he was Professor of History at St. Petersburg University. He was a man of wide erudition.

So typical and universal are Gogol's character drawings that the names of Chichikov, Khlestakov and the rest have become household words in Russian. But these old types are perhaps not to be found in the modern world? Indeed they are. You need not look far in society today to find people and situations for which Gogol's farseeing genius created the prototypes. Are there not still people who pile up wealth for themselves even at the cost of human blood and human life? Are there not many vacuous Manilovs who merely dream of doing good, but hold aloof from the real needs and hopes of the masses? Are there not many who profess to be on the side of the people but—"uncertain" creatures, "neither ours nor yours" as Gogol described them—are not so in reality? The qualities, habits and morals that Gogol warred against still exist wherever the social order giving rise to them exists. Gogol, the great Russian writer, lives on in world culture; and he lives on in our modern life as a singer of brotherhood and progress.

—Abridged from NEWS, 6, 1952.

# A GREAT HUMANIST

**S. Petrov**



GOGOL occupies an outstanding place in the history of Russian and of world literature; the great national cultural heritage of the Russian people is at the same time the common heritage of all mankind.

Let us cast a glance at Gogol's own times. He was born in 1809, three years before the Napoleonic invasion. During his boyhood there occurred another notable event, the Decembrist rising of 1825. He died shortly before serfdom was abolished. His talent reached the height of its powers in the 1830s and 1840s. This was a dark period in Russian history. The people were groaning under the yoke of serfdom and bureaucracy. Since the suppression of the Decembrist rising by Nicholas I political reaction and social oppression had been rampant; all freedom of thought was cruelly persecuted. But as well as the Russia of the landlords and the bureaucracy there was a Russia of the people, a freedom-loving Russia, from which sprang outstanding fighters against serfdom and the autocratic monarchy, men like Radishchev and the Decembrists; this was the Russia of Pushkin, Lermontov, Belinsky, Herzen, Glinka and Shchepkin. The inspirer of this progressive movement was Russian literature. "The whole literature of the Nicholas period," wrote Herzen, "was a literature of opposition, an unceasing protest against government oppression. . . . Its songs were subversive, its laughter undermined. Suppressed in the newspapers, it came to life again in the university; persecuted as poetry, it continued its work in the university's natural science course."

Gogol's tales gave rise to a whole series of truthful works on the hard lot of the common people. Praising Gogol's realism, Belinsky stressed that the features of his talent were "simplicity of invention, true popular spirit, absolute truthfulness, originality and humour". "After *Wit Works Woe* [Griboyedov]", wrote Belinsky, "I know of nothing in the Russian language distinguished by such pure morality as Gogol's stories, or able to exercise a more lasting and beneficial influence on morals."

In 1835 Gogol wrote his great comedy, *The Government Inspector*, a jewel of the Russian stage. With Griboyedov and Pushkin, Gogol laid the foundations of Russian national drama and brought realism to the Russian stage.

Gogol spent a great deal of time abroad, chiefly in Rome. He admired the lovely Italian scenery, the grandeur of Italy's ancient history and the power of her art. At the same time he spoke with deep sadness of the decline in Italy's great art caused by the development of capitalism. "Is not that" remarks a character in his unfinished story about Rome, "the cause of the cold indifference enveloping the present age, of this low commercial calculation, of the deadening of feelings before they have had time to develop?"

Of all Gogol's creations, the greatest is *Dead Souls*. With epic realism he depicted the "dead souls", all the idle, lazy, coarse, gluttonous characters who were exploiting the serfs to the uttermost. These characters are types. *Manilovism* has become synonymous with futile daydreaming, lack of principle or will-power; *Nozdryovism* is brazenness, sluttishness, slickness, dishonesty. The picture Gogol drew was a grim indictment of the ruling classes and the Tsarist government. This immortal work showed plainly that a social system based on oppression is bound to engender swindling and self-seeking.

When Gogol was slandered by the reactionary press, Belinsky came to his defence. "Suddenly," wrote Belinsky, "in the midst of this carnival of pettiness, mediocrity, nonentity and worthlessness, in the midst of this barrenness, these evanescent literary bubbles, these infantile attempts, these childish thoughts and false sentiments, this pharisaical patriotism and pseudo-nationalism, suddenly like a bright flash of lightning in an oppressive, stifling, sultry atmosphere, there

appears a work . . . cast up from the innermost depths of the life of the people, a work as sincere as patriotic, a work that ruthlessly strips the coverings from reality, that breathes a passionate and vital love of the fertile core of Russian life. . . ." Belinsky stressed the point that Gogol's genius had completely altered the views on art itself and had set a new concept of art "as a reproduction of reality in all its truth".

Gogol's premature death shook Russian society. The police and the censors took every possible step to prevent an anti-government demonstration during the funeral, but in spite of their efforts all Moscow accompanied the great writer on his last journey.

The importance of Gogol's work in the development of Russian realist letters is great indeed. It was a gigantic step forward in Russian realism. Gogol was the teacher of many Russian writers. Turgenev, Tolstoy and Goncharov called his creative methods their school. He exercises a tremendous influence on the craftsmanship of Soviet writers also. His thorough study of his subject, the extraordinary expressiveness and clarity of his word-pictures, his precise individualisation of every personage, with his forceful typicalness, his social generalisation, his dynamic plot development, all make his works models of literature.

Georg Brandes, the Danish critic, addressing Russian authors, wrote: "Thanks to Gogol . . . you have outstripped the rest of Europe in your poetic creation." The Bulgarian writer, Ivan Vazov, called Gogol "a miraculous artist", "the father of the modern school of literature", "an original genius". A letter from the University of Geneva (at the centenary of Gogol's birth, in 1909) called him "a humorist who has few equals in the world's literature", and a letter from a group of British authors said: ". . . the excellence of his works makes them of high value to the world . . . as works of art his books take a high place in European letters".

The peoples of the USSR revere his memory as that of a great figure in Russian literature, a writer-patriot whose genius brought glory to his native land and its culture. The hundredth anniversary of his death is being widely observed by the Soviet people and the whole world. The writings of this great humanist are immortal, for through them he enters our era as a friend and ally of all honest men and women fighting for the ideals of freedom, world peace and the dignity of man.

*Abridged from SOVIET LITERATURE, 3. 1952.*



## CHRONOLOGY



- 1809: March 20. Birth of N. V. Gogol at Sorochintsy in the Ukraine.  
 1819: Gogol sent to study at Poltava, and later at Nezhin.  
 1828: Gogol graduates from the Nezhin *Gymnasium of Higher Sciences*.  
 1829: Gogol goes to St. Petersburg.  
 1831: Vol. I of *EVENINGS ON A FARM NEAR DIKANKA*. (*Sorochintsy Fair*; *St. John's Eve*; *May Night*; *The Lost Document*.)  
 Gogol meets Pushkin.  
 1832: Vol. II of *EVENINGS ON A FARM NEAR DIKANKA*. (*Christmas Eve*; *A Terrible Revenge*; *Ivan Fyodorovich Shponka and his Aunt*; *A Place Bewitched*.)  
 1834/35: Gogol Professor of History at St. Petersburg University.  
 1835: *ARABESQUES*. (*The Portrait*; *Nevsky Prospect*; *Notes of a Madman*.)  
*MIRGOROD*. (*Old-World Gentlefolk*; *Taras Bulba*; *The Troll*; *The Tale of How It Came About That Ivan Ivanovich Quarrelled with Ivan Nikiforovich*.)  
 1836: *THE GOVERNMENT INSPECTOR*.  
 Gogol leaves Russia for Italy.  
 1837: Death of Pushkin.  
 1842: New revised edition of *THE GOVERNMENT INSPECTOR*.  
*THE OVERCOAT*.  
*DEAD SOULS*.  
*COLLECTED WORKS*, 4 vols.  
 1847: *SELECTED PASSAGES FROM CORRESPONDENCE WITH FRIENDS*.  
 1848: Gogol goes to Jerusalem.  
 1849: Gogol returns to Russia and attempts second part of *Dead Souls*.  
 1852: Gogol burns second part of *Dead Souls*.  
 February 21. Death of N. V. Gogol.



## CHRONOLOGY OF ENGLISH PUBLICATIONS



- 1850: Parts of *EVENINGS ON A FARM NEAR DIKANKA* published in *The Mechanics Magazine*.  
 1854: First English translation of *DEAD SOULS*, published anonymously under the title *HOME LIFE IN RUSSIA* by Hurst and Blackett.  
 1886: First English translation of *TARAS BULBA*. Nine others have appeared since.  
 1887-1949: Fifteen different editions of *DEAD SOULS*.  
 1890: First English translation of *THE GOVERNMENT INSPECTOR* (Calcutta).  
 1893-1947: Nine English editions of *THE GOVERNMENT INSPECTOR*.  
 And various collections of the short stories under various names.

# GOGOL HOLDINGS IN SCR LIBRARY



## In English

- DEAD SOULS. Tr. C. J. Hogarth. *Everyman Library*. 5/-, n.e. 1948.  
 DEAD SOULS. Tr. G. Reavey. *Hamish Hamilton, Novel Library*. 6/-, 1948.  
 EVENINGS ON A FARM NEAR DIKANKA. *Chatto & Windus*. 4/-, 1926. OP.  
 STORIES FROM ST. PETERSBURG. Tr. Beatrice Scott. *Lindsay Drummond*.  
 5/-, 1945. OP.  
 TALES FROM GOGOL. Tr. Rosa Portnova. *Sylvan Press*. 10/6, 1945.  
 TALES OF GOOD AND EVIL. Tr. David Magarshack. *John Lehmann*. 8/6, 1949.  
 TARAS BULBA and other stories. *Everyman Library*. 5/-, n.e. 1952.  
 TARAS BULBA. Tr. D. C. Baskerville. *Walter Scott Publishing Co*. 1907. OP.  
 THE GOVERNMENT INSPECTOR. Tr. D. J. Campbell. *Sylvan Press*. 12/6, 1947.  
 THE GREATCOAT. Tr. Zlata Schoenberg. *Harrap's Bilingual Series*. 2/6, 1944.  
 THE MANTLE and other stories. Tr. Claud Field. *T. Werner Laurie*. OP.  
 THE OVERCOAT and other stories. Tr. Constance Garnett. *Chatto & Windus*.  
 4/-, 1923. OP.  
 NIKOLAI GOGOL: A CENTENARY SURVEY. By Janko Lavrin. *Sylvan Press*.  
 12/6, 1952.

## In Russian

### a. Works on Gogol

- GOGOL I NEKRASSOV. Kornei Chukovsky. *Goslitizdat*. 1952.  
 GOGOL V VOSPOMINANIYAKH SOVREMENNIKOV. *Goslitizdat*. 1952.  
 N. V. GOGOL O LITERATURE. *Goslitizdat*. 1952.  
 N. V. GOGOL V RUSSKOI KRITIKE I VOSPOMINANIYAKH SOVREMEN-  
 NIKOV. *Detgiz*. 1951.

### b. Works by Gogol

- IZBRANNIYE PROIZVEDENIYA. *Goslitizdat*. 1946.  
 IZBRANNIYE PROIZVEDENIYA. *Moskovsky Rabochy*. 1951.  
 IZBRANNOYE. *Moskovsky Rabochy*. 1948.  
 MERTVIYE DUSHI. *Goslitizdat*. 1937.  
 PETERSBURGSKIYE POVESTI. Illustrated. *Akademia*. 1937.  
 POVESTI. *Goslitizdat*. 1935.  
 POVESTI. *Goslitizdat*. 1937.  
 POVESTI. *Goslitizdat*. 1951.  
 REVIZOR (THE INSPECTOR GENERAL). *Bondar's Russian Readers, Pitman*.  
 1945.  
 SHINEL (THE GREATCOAT). *Harrap's Bilingual Series*. 1944.  
 SHINEL. *Goslitizdat*. 1951.  
 SOBRANIYE SOCHINENII. 6 vols. *Goslitizdat*. 1937.  
 STAROSVETSKIYE POMESHCHIKI. *Goslitizdat*. 1948.  
 TARAS BULBA. *Goslitizdat*. 1944.  
 TARAS BULBA. *Detgiz*. 1946.  
 VECHERA HA KHUTORE BLIZ DIKANKI. *Goslitizdat*. 1952.



Note : See also three Gogol book reviews in this issue, pp. 45, 46.



# THE FORMATION OF THE ENGLISH NATION

Academician E. A. Kosminsky

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This article forms part of the whole range of still-continuing discussions which have been going on in the USSR since the appearance of J. V. Stalin's *Marxism and Linguistics* in 1950, in all branches of science and learning; the main issue in these discussions is that of the relationship between the basis of society and its superstructure, an issue which involves many and varied specific points of argument, in history the debate including questions of periodisation (see *Anglo-Soviet Journal*, Vol. XII, No. 4) and nationality. In this article, Dr. Kosminsky throughout the original uses 'English' and 'England'; for the most part this is in keeping with our usage: occasionally, however—as is customary on the Continent—he uses the words where we should say 'British' and 'Great Britain'.—Editor, *Anglo-Soviet Journal*.

QUESTIONS of the formation of nations and of the gradual development of a community of people (not only of a community of language) from the clan to the tribe, from the tribe to the people, and from the people to the nation, will have a prominent place in the *Universal History* being prepared by the Institute of History of the USSR Academy of Sciences.

Stalin gives us a classically exact, clear and comprehensive definition of the nation as "a historically evolved, stable community of people, arising on the basis of a community of language, territory, economic life and psychological make-up, manifested in a community of culture",<sup>1</sup> emphasising that it is only when all these four characteristics are present that one can speak of a nation. Moreover, "it is sufficient for a single one of these characteristics to be absent to make a nation no longer a nation".<sup>2</sup> "A nation is not merely a historical category, but a historical category belonging to a different epoch, the epoch of rising capitalism. The process of elimination of feudalism and development of capitalism was at the same time a process of amalgamation of people into nations. Such for instance was the case in Western Europe. The English, French, Germans, Italians and others formed themselves into nations at the time of the triumphant progress of capitalism and its triumph over feudal separatism."<sup>3</sup> Speaking of the three periods in the history of the national question, Stalin defines the first period as "the period of the break-up of feudalism in the West and the triumph of capitalism. The formation of peoples into nations belongs to this period. I mean such countries as England (without Ireland), France, Italy."<sup>4</sup> Later he says: "The first period is characterised by the emergence of the nation at the dawn of capitalism."<sup>5</sup>

The elements from which a nation is formed have their own protracted history. "Certainly the elements of a nation—language, territory, cultural community, and so on—did not fall from the sky but were formed gradually in the pre-capitalist period. But these elements were in embryo, and represented at best only a potentiality, in the sense of the possibility of the formation of a nation in the future, given certain favourable circumstances. This potentiality only becomes actual in the period when capitalism, with its national market and its economic and cultural centres, was developing. In the pre-capitalist period there were not and could not be any nations . . . since there were as yet no national markets, national economic or cultural centres; therefore there were not the factors which put an end to the state of economic disintegration

of a given people and draw together the hitherto disconnected parts of that people into one national whole.”<sup>6</sup>

Nations formed in the epoch of rising capitalism are described by Stalin as bourgeois nations. “Such, for example, are the French, English, Italian, North-American and other nations like them. Just such bourgeois nations were the Russian, Ukrainian, Tartar, Armenian, Georgian and other nations in Russia before the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the Soviet system in our country” (*Works*, vol. II, p. 338).

Stalin characterises the specific qualities of bourgeois nations, distinguishing them from socialist nations, defining their ideological and socio-political stock-in-trade as “class peace within the nation for the sake of ‘national unity’; the extension of the territory of their nation by the seizure of other national territories; mistrust and hatred of other nations; the suppression of national minorities.”<sup>7</sup>

Describing the features distinguishing socialist from bourgeois nations, he remarks that socialist nations are “far more unified than any bourgeois nation, since they are free from the irreconcilable class contradictions eating away bourgeois nations, and embrace the whole people far more than does any bourgeois nation.”<sup>8</sup>

Moral and political unity can only be achieved in socialist nations, nations that are free from irreconcilable class contradictions. But does this mean that the bourgeois nation does not represent a community, but is divided into classes that are not linked with each other? No, it does not. “While capitalism exists, the bourgeois and the proletarians will be bound together by all the threads of the economy, as parts of a single capitalist society. The bourgeois cannot live and enrich himself unless he has hired labour at his disposal; the proletarians cannot continue their existence without hiring themselves to the capitalists. . . . Therefore the class struggle, however sharp it may be, cannot lead to the dissolution of society.”<sup>9</sup> In the bourgeois nation, too, people of various classes are closely linked by all the threads of the economy. But these are not the same links as those that unite people in a socialist nation.

The most important problem for the historian, and especially for the medievalist, is to explain how the elements of the nation “developed gradually while still in the pre-capitalist period”. The medievalist has a particular interest in the historical analysis of that “community of people” which preceded the nation, which should be termed a “nationality” [*narodnost*. Tr.], and within which there took place the formation of the elements of the nation. But this is a specialised and very complex question, which we shall not consider at the moment. Similarly we shall not trace the subsequent changes in already-formed bourgeois nations. Our task is to trace the process of the formation of the nation as it takes place at the dawn of capitalism, at the period when capitalism is triumphing over feudal separatism. We must first trace the process for the countries of Western Europe above-mentioned, where it is very clearly defined. This can best be done in the case of England, since the capitalist mode of production triumphed earlier in England than in other countries, the formation of the bourgeois nation was completed earlier, and certain aspects of the process are thus seen especially clearly here.

It is therefore the aim of this article to trace the formation of the English bourgeois nation, during the era of the ending of feudal separatism and the victory of capitalism. In England this period begins with the last decades of the fifteenth century and culminates in the English bourgeois revolution of the seventeenth century. One must, of course, add the proviso that the history of the formation of a nation embraces in essence all aspects of the historical development of the country in the given period, and all questions of economic, political and cultural history linked with this development. “A nation is

primarily a community, a definite community of people. This community is not racial, nor is it tribal. The modern Italian nation was formed from Romans, Teutons, Etruscans, Greeks, Arabs, and so forth. The French nation was formed from Gauls, Romans, Britons, Teutons, and so on. The same should be said of the English, the Germans and others, who were formed into nations from people of different races and tribes."<sup>10</sup>

We shall proceed to examine the way in which the four characteristics that define a nation came together in England.

First: community of language. As historians we must confess that we have paid far too little attention to problems of the history of language. "The sphere of action of language, embracing all spheres of human activity, is far wider and more comprehensive than the sphere of action of the superstructure. It is, indeed, almost unlimited."<sup>11</sup> One can only understand "language and its laws of development by studying it in inseparable connection with the history of society, with the history of the people whose language is being studied, creator and user of the language."<sup>12</sup> It is also obvious that one can only understand the history of a people by studying it in intimate connection with the history of the language. Undoubtedly we still have a great deal of work to do in this direction.

Old English (or, as it is often incorrectly called, 'Anglo-Saxon') was never a single language. It was a number of tribal dialects, which fell into three basic groups, Northumbrian, Mercian and West Saxon. In the course of the ninth century, the West Saxon dialect began to prevail as the written language. At this time there began the Danish conquest of north-eastern England, which exercised considerable influence on the dialects of the Danelaw. The Norman conquest put an end to the political and cultural supremacy of Wessex, and this increased the "anarchy of dialects" in the English language. The conquerors brought with them the French language, which became for a time the language of the upper classes and, with Latin, the language of institutions, of the courts, of official and private documents, of literature and of the schools. The 'supremacy' of French as the language of the upper classes, while the lower classes spoke English, has been advanced by supporters of the theory of the class nature of language as the most important argument in support of their theory. Those who considered themselves to belong to the higher ranks of society, or who wished to show off their education, spoke French, "since if a person does not know French, people have a low opinion of him" (Robert of Gloucester). By the twelfth century, however (as the *Dialogus de Scaccario* confirms), it was difficult to distinguish who was English in origin and who Norman. "*Sic permixtae sunt nationes ut vix decerni potest hodie . . . quis Anglicus et quis Normanus sit genere.*"

They undoubtedly communicated with each other without the use of translators, and the use of French was mere 'showing-off'; spoken French was a court and salon language.

The fourteenth-century poet William Nassington wrote:

Some can French and no Latin  
That have used courts and dwelled therein;  
And some can of Latin a party  
That can French full febelly;  
And some understandeth English  
That neither can Latin nor French:  
But lerid and lewid, old and young,  
All understanden English Tongue.\*

The French of the law courts, of Parliament, of official documents, and partly of the schools, which, with Latin, stubbornly held its own and did not

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\* Quoted by Kosminsky in Russian translation. The original, given above, is quoted in *The Lollard Bible*, by Margaret Deanesly, p. 216.

give way for a long while, is quite another question. That, however, was an artificial language, as far from the spoken language as was Latin. In speaking of community of language "we are of course referring to the colloquial language of the people and not to official and administrative languages".<sup>13</sup>

The intrusion of French into court circles, into literature, into schools, into official establishments, and into military affairs, was bound to have some influence on the English language. It would, however, be entirely wrong to say that any third language derived from this 'crossing'. The English language was the victor. "This crossing does not give rise to a third language, but preserves one of the languages, preserves its grammatical structure and basic word-stock, and enables it to develop in accordance with its own inner laws of growth. It is true that in this process there is a certain enrichment of the word-stock of the victorious language at the expense of the defeated language, but this, so far from weakening, strengthens it."<sup>14</sup>

This analysis is fully applicable to the history of the English language, which retained its grammatical structure and basic word-stock and continued to develop in accordance with its own inner laws of growth, while enriching its word-stock at the expense of French. The general tendency for English to develop from synthetic to analytic structure was already evident before the penetration of French into England.

The popular language, English, did not, however, become general throughout the country all at once. It remained divided into a number of dialects, distinguished in part by their grammatical, but more particularly by their phonetic, structure; so much so that the inhabitants of London found difficulty in understanding the inhabitants of York. The common spoken and literary English language was formed gradually on the basis of the London dialect, which included the peculiarities of the southern and midland dialects. "Some local dialects, in the process of the formation of nations, may become the basis of national languages and develop into independent national languages. . . . As for the rest of the dialects of such languages, they lose their special peculiarities, merge with these languages and disappear in them."<sup>15</sup> The concentration of dialects into a single national language is brought about, above all, "by economic and political concentration".<sup>16</sup>

London was first and foremost the trading and industrial centre of England. It was the largest, or rather the only large, town in England. At the end of the fourteenth century London had about 40,000 inhabitants, while York and Bristol, the towns next in size, had about 12,000. This predominance of London over the other towns of England had become even greater by the seventeenth century. In 1604 the customs receipts of London were £110,000, while those of all the remaining ports were less than £20,000. London was the undisputed centre for the national market which was coming into existence in the sixteenth century. Incidentally, the Great Charter of Liberties had already laid down in the thirteenth century that London weights and measures were compulsory throughout England.

It is quite evident that the economic connections of London with the whole country, and of the whole country with London, helped to make the London dialect the national language. The fact that London also became the centre of political, court and cultural life and of religious movements, and the seat of Parliament, also assisted.

The anti-feudal (and at the same time anti-clerical) agitation which sprang up in England from the end of the fourteenth century may have assisted in no small degree the bringing together of the English dialects. Langland's poem, the appeals of John Ball, the preaching of the Lollards, were widely circulated among the democratic strata of the population. London and the south in general were the starting-points of the agitation, which also penetrated to the

north and spread widely there. The migration of peasants to the towns and their movement from the thickly populated counties of the south and east to the less populated north, the growth of the contingent of hired farm labourers moving from place to place, and the development from the end of the fifteenth century of 'vagabondage' (roaming peasants who had been evicted from their birthplaces by enclosures), were bound to promote the levelling-out of local dialects.

Here we can only touch on developments that helped to establish the London dialect as the common English language, such as the English translation of the Bible, the spread of printing from London (Caxton printed English books in the London dialect), the establishment of the absolute monarchy, the Reformation with its new translations of Holy Writ and its Book of Common Prayer. Literary influences, and especially the theatre, the development of which was centred on London, were considerable. In these ways the London dialect became the basis of the common English language which was being established in literature.<sup>17</sup>

The influence of the English bourgeois revolution on the formation of the common English language is a very interesting subject which still remains almost uninvestigated. It is precisely, however, immediately after the English revolution that we have the decisive formation of an English literary language in grammatical structure, vocabulary, spelling and pronunciation. Modern English is finally formed in the second half of the seventeenth century and the eighteenth century.

At a first glance the question of the creation of a community of territory seems very simple in the case of England. After all, England, after the Norman conquest, did not suffer that feudal separatism which was so characteristic of the Continent: no powerful territorial principalities came into being. The unity of its territories seems to have been achieved in a period when the feudal order was still supreme. This, however, is not true. Community of territory was certainly able to develop more easily in England than, for example, in France, since England was a comparatively small kingdom in which, owing to certain historical conditions, a strong central power developed early. Nevertheless it is difficult to speak of a territorial unity in the pre-capitalist period. The Palatinates of the north and west, the Duchy of Lancaster, the numerous franchises, the huge church estates, and the town corporations, all had their special 'liberties' and privileges. Relations of personal dependence between lords and vassals were not only preserved but strengthened in the fifteenth century, and this slowed down the territorial unification of the country.

The barons of the north and west enjoyed considerable independence. The distinction between the north and west on the one hand and the south and east on the other was very clearly revealed at the time of the bourgeois revolution in the seventeenth century, when the country was divided into two camps by the Civil War. It was revealed to a very considerable extent during the Wars of the Roses, which Engels considered the beginning of the foundation of the English national state. These wars showed that the feudal structure cut the map of the country up into small fragments, even though it did not create consolidated territorial principalities. The feudal conspiracies of the sixteenth century ripened in the north of the country, Charles I fled to the north at the beginning of the war against Parliament. The levelling capacity of the absolute monarchy by no means ended this lack of integration; and only the bourgeois revolution, with its sweeping confiscations of crown, episcopal and royalist lands, and its vast transfers of property, destroyed the last remnants of feudal separatism.

There is very little left to say on the formation of a community of economic life. The national market was formed in the sixteenth century, with



the growth of capitalist relations, as the basis of the economic community of the country. We only need to stress the immense role of the English bourgeois revolution in the final consolidation of the "economic integration" of England, in the destruction of the last remnants of natural economy linked with feudal relations.

The investigator has perhaps the greatest difficulty when dealing with the history of the formation of the fourth sign of a nation, community of psychological make-up, or 'national character'—so much so that Stalin has more than once described it as "elusive". "Inasmuch, however, as it manifests itself in a distinctive culture common to the nation, it is definable and cannot be ignored."<sup>18</sup>

Each nation has its own qualitative peculiarities. These are the contribution every nation makes to the general treasure-house of world culture.

"'National character' is not a thing that is fixed once and for all, but is modified by changes in the conditions of life; but since it exists at every given moment, it leaves its imprint on the physiognomy of the nation."<sup>19</sup>

National character is determined by all the peculiarities of the historical development of the nation, all the unique features of its conditions of existence. "What is national character, if not a reflection of the conditions of life, a coagulation of impressions derived from environment?"<sup>20</sup>

National character reveals itself in the particular characteristics of the culture common to the nation as a whole.

Culture is part of the superstructure, and may be slave-owning, feudal, capitalist or socialist. There cannot be an extra-class culture in a class society. "Every national culture contains, even if in an undeveloped form, the *elements* of democratic and socialist culture, since *every* nation has its working and exploited masses, whose conditions of life give rise, inescapably, to democratic and socialist ideology. But *every* nation also has a bourgeois culture (and the majority a 'Black Hundred' and clerical culture as well), not simply as components but as the *dominating* culture."<sup>21</sup>

We are especially interested in considering how the English national character was formed during the creation of the English nation. One may speak of a community of culture at that time. The bourgeoisie and the 'new gentry' connected with it had not yet severed their spiritual links with the popular environment from which they had but recently emerged. The revolutionary spirit which had enabled them to become the leading classes of the bourgeois revolution had not yet been extinguished. The great works of national culture of this period derive their strength from a genuinely popular basis.

The peasant rising of 1381, Wyclif and the Lollards, Langland and Chaucer, are all on the threshold of the formation of the English nation. The period sees such works as Thomas More's *Utopia*, which puts forward, even if in a still imprecise and confused form, the greatest ideal that has ever confronted mankind, the ideal of communist society. This period gave rise to the all-embracing and profoundly national genius of Shakespeare, to the living humour of Ben Jonson, to the materialist philosophy of Bacon. The nation is fused in the fire of revolution, which brought forward the humanist genius of Milton, the ardent defenders of liberty Lilburne, Rainborough and Sexby, and the sharp criticism in Winstanley's pamphlets of property-owning society and its state and church.

The immediate consequence of the revolution was the development of science, which produced a number of distinguished names, including the great Newton, and that development of social and philosophical thought which enabled Engels to describe materialism as "the natural born son of Great Britain".<sup>22</sup>

It was in fact in England that was born the philosophical and scientific movement which became the basis of the French 'Enlightenment', and which had so great an influence on the culture of the whole of Europe. We may indeed speak of the great achievements of the English national culture of this period. Two cultures (the *dominant* being that of the bourgeoisie and of the new gentry closely linked with it) are, however, already beginning to appear quite clearly in England at this time.

England was the first country in Europe in which a bourgeois nation with a national character of its own came into existence. It was England that supplied the prototype of the bourgeois, complete in all respects, appearing often in real life and many times depicted in literature: first the bourgeois of the period of primitive accumulation, then the bourgeois of the epoch of the industrial revolution, the bourgeois of the epoch of free trade, and finally the bourgeois of the imperialist era.

In studying the elements out of which was constituted the 'national character' of the English bourgeoisie, we have to remember that the bourgeois class included within itself the 'new gentry', and that this conditioned the development of many of its specific features: its conservatism, its snobbishness, its worship of tradition, its respect for pedigrees and titles, and especially the 'spirit of compromise' so highly praised in English bourgeois literature.

The religious colouring of the English bourgeois revolution made a deep impression on the English national character.

Gardiner called Cromwell "the typical Englishman of the new period". This is too great an honour for the English bourgeoisie. It cannot be denied, however, that the Puritans of the seventeenth century showed many of the characteristics that appeared later in a distorted and debased form in their nineteenth- and twentieth-century descendants. Bourgeois historians have constantly eulogised the English bourgeois of the period of primitive accumulation, his firmness, patriotism, steadfastness, resolution and faithfulness to his convictions. They consider that puritanism steeled the English national character and reflected its heroic age. But can we forget the ease with which the bourgeois Puritan, true to his class nature, was transformed from a revolutionary to a violator and an oppressor, a swindler and a speculator? Can we forget his cold cruelty, his cant and hypocrisy, his habit of covering up the most infamous deeds with the highest religious and moral principles? The English bourgeois of this period also appears before us as the organiser of pirate expeditions, a trader in slaves black and white, and an exterminator of tribes in the colonies.

It would, however, be unjust to forget the other side of the question, the contribution which the national culture of the English bourgeoisie made to the cultural heritage of mankind. It is sufficient to recall such names as Byron and Shelley, Dickens and Darwin. We must remember, however, that the great English national writers were sharply negative in their attitude towards the psychological make-up of the English bourgeoisie.

The elements of proletarian culture are formed in the bourgeois nation, together with the dominant bourgeois culture. It was in England that the proletariat was first formed as a class. It is still too soon to speak of proletarian culture during the formation of the bourgeois nation. One can, however, already discern in the manifestos of the Levellers, the ideas of the Diggers, the pamphlets of Winstanley, those features that later come to our notice in the national proletarian movement of the nineteenth century, in the struggle for parliamentary reforms, and in Chartism.

England is one of those West European countries in which the nation and the national state were formed at one and the same time. "The formation of nations in these instances at the same time signified their conversion into inde-

pendent national states. The English, French and other nations are at the same time the English, French and other states."<sup>23</sup>

The formation of the English bourgeois nation begins during the absolute monarchy, under the Tudors and the first Stuarts. In this way the English nation begins to develop within the framework of a feudal state, and this feudal state establishes itself to a certain degree as a national state. While remaining a feudal state, which safeguards above all the interests of the feudal lords, represses the anti-feudal peasant movements and defends the feudal mode of production, it nevertheless carries on a not unsuccessful struggle against feudal separatism. It assists the economic unification of the country by eliminating feudal strife, and the development of capitalist property in land by a policy of confiscations necessitated by political and financial considerations. It achieves the independence from Rome of the English Church, and carries on an external struggle against the rivals of the English bourgeoisie. It terrorises the nascent proletariat and subjects it to the will of the employers by a bloody legal code based on wholly feudal concepts. The feudal state at the stage of absolutism assisted the formation of the English bourgeois nation.

At the same time, however, the absolute monarchy could not fully develop into a national state because of its feudal character, and it retarded, especially in its last decades, the formation of the English bourgeois nation. That formation was completed by the bourgeois revolution, which also completed the formation of the national state.

The national state in England, however, was formed under unique conditions which have made an ineradicable impression on both the state and the nation.

In the period of formation as a nation we already find certain elements of the multi-national state in England, "with one more developed nation at the head and the remaining, less developed, nations in a state of political and later of economic subjection to the dominant nation".<sup>24</sup> It would be more accurate to say that we find in England not a multi-national but a two-nation state. Although national oppression and national struggle occurred both in Scotland and in Wales, they played a secondary part in comparison with the great significance of the 'Irish Question'.

We do not intend in this article to raise the whole complex of questions involved in Anglo-Irish relations during the period of the formation of the English nation and the English national state. We only wish to stress the great influence which the subjugation of Ireland had on the English nation. Ireland became an experimental station for English landlordism in its most repressive form, an experimental station for national oppression, economic enslavement and the plundering and subjection of nations. Ireland was made into a bastion of reaction.

And the English bourgeois revolution was the decisive point in this plundering and enslavement of Ireland.

This period of the English bourgeois revolution sees the beginning of the transformation of England into a multi-national state in another respect also. "The old national states in the west—England, Italy, France—cease to be national states; in other words, by virtue of the seizure of new territories they become converted into multi-national, colony-owning states, thereby presenting an arena for that national and colonial oppression which in Eastern Europe existed still earlier."<sup>25</sup> The complete development of these trends belongs to the period of imperialism. England had, however, already begun colonial seizures, the extermination of local populations, trade in slaves black and white, at the time of its formation as a national state.

We have dealt (very fleetingly, it is true) with the most important questions arising out of the formation of the English bourgeois nation. We must

emphasise once again that what we have said does not apply to the English people as a whole, since the bourgeois nation is devoid of the principal distinguishing feature of socialist nations, that is it lacks unity and does not embrace the whole people, owing to irreconcilable internal class contradictions.<sup>26</sup>

"The unity of the nation diminishes also from internal causes, owing to the growing acuteness of the class struggle. In the early stages of capitalism one may still speak of a 'cultural community' between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. But as large-scale industry develops and the class struggle becomes more and more acute, this 'community' begins to melt away. One cannot speak seriously of the 'cultural community' of a nation when the masters and the workers of a nation have ceased to understand each other. What 'common fate' can there be when the bourgeoisie thirsts for war and the proletariat declares 'war on war'?"<sup>27</sup>

In conclusion, one question of a theoretical nature should be put. Which class was the creator of the nation, which class made possible by its struggle the formation of people into a national community?

In the formation of the nation, the role of the working people in town and country, the creators of material values, is undoubtedly very great, since their daily work and their class struggle pushed forward the development of the productive forces and prepared both the destruction of the feudal order and the victory of the bourgeois revolution.

It would be an over-simplification and a mistake, however, not to see the active participation of other classes also, including the feudal classes, in the process of the formation of the nation. The gradual political unification of the feudal class, the strengthening of the feudal state, directed in the first instance towards the repression of the exploited masses of the people, the growth of the royal power and the formation of a feudal absolute monarchy were all factors in the development of the nation, even though the formation of the bourgeois nation could not be completely achieved while the feudal order remained.

The most active role in the formation of the bourgeois nation, both in the development of capitalism and in the destruction of the feudal order, was played by the bourgeoisie.

This statement scarcely requires proof. Lenin showed that the formation of national connections on the basis of the development of capitalism meant the formation of bourgeois connections, since the bourgeoisie stood at the head of the process of the development of the market and of national connections.<sup>28</sup> This is precisely why Stalin called nations formed in this period bourgeois nations. Lenin wrote in 1914: "Nations are an inevitable product and inevitable form in the bourgeois epoch of social development."<sup>29</sup>

The bourgeois revolution, which established the class hegemony of the bourgeoisie, was the decisive point in the formation of the bourgeois nation in England. It would not be difficult to prove the same for France.

*Abridged from VOPROSY ISTORII, No. 9, 1951.*

#### NOTE

ACADEMICIAN KOSMINSKY is a specialist in the history of the English peasantry, and is the author (among other works) of *Angliiskaya Derevnja v XIII veke* [*The English Village in the Thirteenth Century*], 1935, which is at present in process of translation into English. He is a member of the Economic History Society (London), and has been a contributor to *The Economic History Review*. He has recently contributed to the collection (appearing at irregular intervals under the auspices of the Historical Institute of the USSR Academy of Sciences) dealing with medieval history in many countries, *Srednie Veka* [*The Middle Ages*], Part 3 of which was reviewed in *Voprosy Istorii*, 1952, 3.

*See REFERENCES on p. 29.*

# MEDICINE IN THE USSR

Horace Joules, M.D., M.R.C.S.

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WHEN my colleague and I received an invitation to go to the Soviet Union with a number of scientists we felt it advisable to attempt to see the present state of medical services in Moscow ; in a town where reconstruction was under way (for this we chose Stalingrad) ; and in a city where, until the revolution, medical services had been extremely backward (for this we asked to go to Tashkent in Central Asia). We were surprised to find that the services were quite comparable in these three differing cities and no attempt will be made in this article to distinguish between them. We saw something of the health provision on a collective farm, but we cannot claim to have studied the rural services adequately. Our hosts did everything possible to meet each of our wishes, and in this they were most successful. If we failed to contact one or two special departments in which we had a particular interest, this was more than compensated for by the fact that ministers and heads of departments generally gave us freely of their time. Few interviews lasted less than three hours and none of them ended until we felt we were tired or had asked every question.

The most striking feature of their medicine today is the emphasis on prevention. This pervades the whole of the services. It was probably the only way by which the situation could be tackled in the immediate post-revolutionary period. The mortality from preventable diseases at that stage was staggering. The advantages that emphasis on prevention has brought have been enormous and we can learn much from the modification in the approach to medicine that has resulted from it. Much inspiration for this comes from the All Union Institute of Central Scientific Research for Hygiene and Sanitary Instruction. Its headquarters are situated in a most beautiful building in Moscow, and it has its counterpart in every republic in the Union. We spent some four and a half hours with the director of this institute, and she not only gave us a very lucid account of the work but imparted to us some of that inspiration that she and her staff so obviously get from the work they are doing. It is compulsory for all health workers to take part in preventive activities. Doctors must spend a minimum of six hours per month teaching various aspects of preventive medicine. The institute devises and tests various methods of health education, and it works through the schools and pre-school institutes, through trade unions and other organisations for industrial workers, through collective farms in villages, through the nationwide Red Cross and Crescent, and, of course, through the more diffuse organs of propaganda such as the press and radio. It is advised by a very broadly based scientific council and has a chair of organisation of public health work. It is assisted by an Art Committee on which doctors and artists sit to prepare the beautiful posters, coloured slides and extremely artistic pamphlets and films.

An example of their practical approach to preventive problems was shown when I inquired of their attitude to smoking and cancer of the lung. I was told they knew of the work done in America and in this country. They had been impressed by the findings and had commenced to educate the public in this matter. This had been carried out mainly in schools and to a lesser extent in factories. There was already a ten per cent reduction in the con-



sumption of tobacco over the country as a whole. This contrasts very favourably with the official attitude in this country, which attempts to ignore this extremely important problem and its cause. More than 10,000 people are dying annually and yet we do nothing. The institute gives very close attention to medical education, and its members have a prominent position on the Curriculum Committee for undergraduate medical students. Thus preventive medicine is brought at the earliest possible moment to the attention of those practising it subsequently. The output of literature is quite astonishing, and technical pamphlets and publications are available on the prevention of many diseases, ranging from silicosis to peptic ulcer and high blood pressure. We saw three of the seventy-four films at present available and current. They were of a high standard and seemed to us to be most effective.

Health supervision is undertaken at the place of work where possible, and the frequency of routine examinations is related to the conditions of work and the age of the population. Miners engaged at the coal face have miniature X-rays of the chest taken at monthly intervals, while dock workers and seamen are X-rayed twice yearly. Children in crèches have monthly overhauls, and it is claimed that the infant mortality is now little over twenty per 1,000. Young children are subjected to the following inoculations: B.C.G. is compulsory at birth and usually given in the maternity hospital; at four months vaccination against smallpox is undertaken, and at twelve months vaccination against diphtheria. Dental inspection and treatment commence from the age of three years. Special children's physicians care for the child's health while below sixteen years of age. In the early years at school they are examined four times each year and this is later reduced to twice a year. Medical treatment is given while at school, but any major departure from health is referred to the pediatrician at the regional polyclinic or health centre. There is one school doctor for every 800 schoolchildren, but he also works at the hospital or polyclinic. If children are taken ill at home, the district children's physician will visit and will inform the school doctor of the diagnosis. Routine X-rays are carried out at the age of seven, twelve and seventeen. This practice commenced before the war, but has been organised on a nationwide scale since 1945.

There has been a very sharp fall in the incidence of tuberculosis recently after the rise which took place during the war. Extra beds were opened to facilitate treatment of these cases immediately after the war, but now these extra beds have been closed for lack of patients. Tuberculosis is treated in special departments of general hospitals as well as in sanatoria. There is no waiting for treatment in a general hospital, but still some delay in getting to the sanatorium, usually situated at Yalta or other places near the Black Sea. Tens of millions of X-rays of the chest are taken every year and an attempt is being made to ensure that the general population in the susceptible age group is X-rayed annually.

### *Personal Health Services*

Private practice is not forbidden in the Soviet Union, but the Deputy Minister of Health stated that they are doing their best to eliminate it by increasing both the quality and quantity of the free services. A personal doctor is obtained by registering at the polyclinic or health centre which will be found in association with any large factory or place of business, or in the district near the person's home. The doctor is seen by appointment and we had personal evidence that there is very little waiting. Should illness prevent attendance at the centre a telephone message, preferably before 1 p.m., will ensure the doctor calling at home that day. We saw health centres in each of the large cities which were either attached to factories or serving a local community.

They were extremely well planned and spacious. Each had X-ray facilities and some had associated facilities for pathological investigations. In two cases there were beds in which illness of a minor nature could be treated by the doctor at the clinic. Treatment throughout the clinics is free except for simple medicines which are obtained from and paid for at the local chemist's. Expensive drugs and those given by injection are free. Personal experience of treatment at a clinic at 12.30 a.m. left the impression of great competence on the part of the practitioner, who supplied a prescription for a drug which was obtained from a store which remained open all night. The cost of this was one-twentieth of what it would have been to a hospital in this country. In each centre visited there was a well-equipped dental department with special and separate facilities for children. Doctors and nurses work a six-hour day, and this applies to night duty also. There was evidence of the constant emphasis placed on prevention, a lecture room was always available and many pamphlets and slides on view. There was no evidence of pressure on the health workers, who obviously found their occupation very satisfying, and this despite the fact that the pay of a health centre doctor was considerably less than that of a skilled engineer or miner. It is important to remember that these doctors correspond to our general practitioners. There is an increasing insistence on these doctors having regular experience in hospital and this has been organised in many areas.

### *Hospitals*

Hospital provision is on a much more lavish scale than here and fifteen beds per 1,000 population are available, exclusive of those needed by mental hospitals and for mental deficiency cases. This provision is more than twice that obtained in this country. The total cost per bed in a large general hospital in Moscow is fifty roubles per day (a rouble is possibly equivalent to 6d.). A 2,300-bed hospital has an associated staff of over 3,000. This is an exceptionally large hospital and the authorities feel that the optimum size of a hospital should be between 400 and 900 beds. There was no shortage of hospital workers, particularly nursing staff. This is partly accounted for by the fact that crèches, kindergarten, schools and flats are supplied for the hospital workers. The flats, in the case of Moscow, are supplied by the City Soviet. There is practically no waiting, even for such common operations as enucleation of tonsils and adenoids or repair of hernia.

Should serious illness or accident occur at home it is merely necessary to dial 01 on the telephone and a very fast car containing a doctor, nurse and attendant will respond immediately. The doctor, having made a diagnosis, decides to which hospital the patient shall be admitted, for he has a knowledge of all available beds in the city area. A noteworthy advance in Moscow is that severe accidents are admitted only to the special accident hospital or to the special fracture departments of two large general hospitals. Smaller hospitals are not encouraged to deal with these very difficult problems. The only exception made to this is when the patient is found to be too ill to travel any long distance.

We studied very closely the present methods of diagnosis and treatment of medical cases and felt they would be regarded as being orthodox by our own standards. There is an increasing insistence on Pavlov's work and its application to clinical medicine. This is being felt, for instance, in the treatment of gastric ulcer, where prolonged narcosis is being used. Childbirth in hospitals is encouraged and the State hopes to maintain a 100 per cent admission rate. Expectant mothers are trained in methods of relaxation meant to

diminish the pain of childbirth. This is stated to be giving good results in a large number of cases. Breast feeding is encouraged and a high rate is said to be maintained. The importance of this in the prevention of infantile diarrhoea is well known to the whole community.

In each major hospital there is a weekly conference of doctors, nurses, etc. Scientific libraries are well equipped. One that we investigated had 200,000 volumes and English and other foreign literature was freely available. There was an excellent general library for the staff and a separate one for the patients. The fall in the price of instruments is noteworthy; a gastroscope costing 1,200 roubles in 1948 is now being supplied for 350 roubles, while certain sulphonamides, supplied from the State factories, cost about one-sixteenth of the price we pay.

The wards are small. We saw only one which contained more than six beds, but the sanitation and facilities for bedpans, etc., are not as good as in this country. The grounds of hospitals did not show the same care in upkeep. Hospital administration is controlled by a senior medical officer who also does clinical work. There is an assistant physician to help with medical matters and an accountant who deals with the lay side. The City Soviet administers the hospital through a sub-committee, although the money is allocated from central funds. There seems to be no clash of interests between the central and local administration. All workers in the hospital are organised in a single trade union, and this seems to exercise an efficient bar to the uncontrolled use of power by those in authority. In the pleasant day rooms in which patients sit when they are not confined to bed we once again found evidence of teaching preventive medicine, and we were told that frequent lectures take place for those patients who are up and discussions over the internal wireless for those still in bed.

We inquired into so many other aspects of the health services that a number of lay members of our delegation felt they were eligible to sit for the final qualifying examination in medicine. We concluded that the most noteworthy features of this service were the enthusiasm of all grades of staff whom we met, the complete absence of any sense of frustration, and that the facilities were equal to the needs of the population.

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27. STALIN. *Marxism and the National and Colonial Question*, p. 32.
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# TRADE UNION ACTIVITY IN SOVIET FACTORIES : 3

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*Collective agreements, which in the USSR are concluded at the factory level—in view of the wide range of subjects covered in labour legislation or regulated by direct agreement between the Central Council of Trade Unions and the planning bodies—are the subject of the following translations from the Soviet trade union press. The general survey was published in TRADE UNIONS, the monthly organ of the Central Council of Trade Unions (circulation 30,000): the article on a works agreement appeared in the fortnightly IN AID OF ACTIVE TRADE UNIONISTS (circulation 75,000), and the article on results in TRUD, trade union daily newspaper (circulation 700,000).*

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## COLLECTIVE AGREEMENTS IN THE USSR

G. Moskalenko



THE pre-war practice of concluding collective agreements in industrial, transport and building establishments was resumed in February 1947. Subsequently it was also introduced into communications, State farms, machine and tractor stations, afforestation and forestry, peat-cutting, State trade and public catering.

The number of collective agreements concluded on this basis has grown rapidly. In 1947 25,000 were concluded, 46,000 by 1949 and over 50,000 in each of the subsequent years.

The purpose for which collective agreements are concluded is to ensure the fulfilment and over-fulfilment of production plans, the further rise in productivity of labour and improvement in labour organisation on the one hand ; on the other, to increase the sense of responsibility of managements and trade union organisations for improvement of the material, living and cultural conditions of the workers, technicians and employees.

The conclusion of agreements and the mass check on their fulfilment take place each year in an atmosphere of high political activity and production enthusiasm.

The essence of the Soviet collective agreement is determined by the socialist relations of production dominant in our country. In the USSR the implements and means of production are socialist property, and cannot serve the purpose of the exploitation of man by man.

There are no antagonistic classes in socialist society, and the State guards the interests of the working people and expresses in its laws the will of the whole people. Consequently there are not and cannot be any class contra-

dictions between workers and managements. The managements of socialist enterprises and the trade union bodies which conclude collective agreements pursue the same common object—to extend and promote production in every possible way, to raise productivity of labour and on this basis to improve the material well-being of the masses.

In accordance with the decision of the Council of Ministers of the USSR of February 4, 1947, collective agreements are concluded between the management of an enterprise and the factory or works committee of the trade union concerned, the former acting as representative of the enterprise and the factory or works committee as representatives of the workers and clerical employees of the particular enterprise.

The procedure for conclusion of collective agreements is laid down by letters of direction, issued by Ministries and Central Committees of Trade Unions and agreed with the Central Council of Trade Unions. These letters must contain all the main indices laid down for the enterprises concerned, on the basis of the State plan for production, productivity of labour, wages, labour protection, housing, welfare and cultural services. At the same time they give directions to the factory or works committees as to the development of socialist emulation, assistance to the workers, engineering and technical personnel and employees in raising their skill, supervising observance of labour legislation, correctly applying established wages systems, measures for improving labour discipline and combating interruptions in production and wastage.

On receipt of the letter of direction, the director of the enterprise and the works or factory committee begin drafting the collective agreement. The Presidium of the Central Council of Trade Unions, in its resolution of December 8, 1951, on collective agreements for 1952, requested that in drafting these agreements the State plan for the year and the letters of direction be taken as the guide, while the model collective agreement approved by the CCTU for the particular branch of industry concerned be used as a basis, taking account of the particular features of the enterprise.

In the drafting of a collective agreement all the standing commissions of the factory, works or office committee, all the departmental or shop committees and trade union group organisers,\* and the entire body of active trade unionists, should all take part.

A typical example is the following. In preparing the draft collective agreement for 1951 at the Kaganovich State Ball-Bearings Works in Moscow, a wide body of active trade unionists took part, together with representatives of the management and the works committee. Hundreds of workmen, engineers, technicians, and foremen made valuable proposals for the draft agreement. For example Alexander Burov, a Stakhanovite in the ball-bearings shop, suggested that the agreement should contain a clause for the application in all branches of production of his method of machine-setting, which ensures uninterrupted production by the next shift. During the very first month of the application of this method Burov's team raised its output by twelve per cent, in the second by eighteen per cent, and in the third by forty per cent. The new agreement contained a clause that the management and works committee undertake to arrange teams to organise machine-setting by this method; and this measure produced considerable results throughout the works.

Again, the original text of the draft at this works mentioned only in general terms the obligation of the works committee "to take an active part in organising Stakhanov schools and in arranging lectures, talks and consultations in the departments and the works clubs on production technique". When the draft came under discussion, a proposal was made to put down precisely how this work would be organised and to include definite dates.

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\*Elected by at least twenty workers, and roughly analogous to shop stewards.



This was taken into account when the text was being finally established ; and it led to the successful development of the most varied forms of technical training at this particular works.

The draft collective agreement, drawn up by the management and the works or factory committee with participation of the active trade unionists, is discussed at departmental and shift meetings of the workers, manual and clerical. All the suggestions made at these meetings must be entered in the minutes and examined by the director and the works committee. The works committee and management are bound to give the meeting the fullest possible explanations in those cases when, for justifiable reasons, particular suggestions cannot be adopted.

After these discussions, amendments and additions are made in the draft incorporating those suggestions which have been adopted by the management and works committee. Then the draft is brought before the general works meeting of workers for discussion—or, in large undertakings, laid before a works delegate conference.

Before the new collective agreements are concluded, there must be a mass check on the fulfilment of the previous year's agreement. The summing-up of the results of this check, and the discussion of the draft new agreement, should take place at the same general meetings or conferences of workers, manual and clerical.

In cases when differences arise between the director and the works committee during the conclusion of an agreement, they are handed over for settlement by the Ministry and Central Committee of the Union for the given industry. Last year, for example, there was a case when the management of one of the large garages at Bryansk, in concluding the collective agreement for 1951, rejected a request of the works committee to install furniture in the Red Corner,\* alleging that it had not the necessary funds. The Ministry of Road Transport of the Russian Federation and the Central Committee of the Auto-Transport Workers' Union, to whom the dispute was referred, decided in favour of the works committee.

After signature by the director and the chairman of the factory or works committee, the collective agreement is sent for registration to the Central Committee of the Union and the appropriate Ministry or Department. If the agreement has been concluded in an undertaking belonging to the executive committee of a Soviet, and not under the Ministry of some Republic, its registration is carried out by a representative of the Central Committee of the Union and the executive committee of the Regional Soviet concerned.

If clauses are discovered, when the collective agreement has been registered, which are in contradiction to labour legislation or the approved planning indices, the Union's Central Committee and the Ministry make the necessary amendments in the text, and only register the agreement thereafter.

Once registered, the collective agreement is printed in the necessary number of copies and handed by the director to every worker, manual and clerical, not later than one month after registration. Careful study of the agreement by all employed is the guarantee of the validity of the agreement, and the necessary condition of everyday supervision of its fulfilment by the whole mass of workers of the enterprise.

The introductory section of the collective agreement should give a clear definition of its economic and political importance, indicate its purpose and name the parties concluding the agreement. Then follow the sections containing the obligations of each side in respect of carrying out the State plan of output, wages and quality level, training of personnel, strengthening of public and labour discipline, satisfaction of the housing and living conditions

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\* Recreation and lecture room.



requirements of the workers, supplies and public catering for the workers, labour protection and cultural and welfare services.

Even a rapid survey of the contents of the agreements concluded in the USSR is convincing evidence that the collective agreement represents a genuine basis for trade union work in the factory, covering all the many sides of trade union activity.

The tenth Trade Union Congress (1949) made it incumbent on trade union bodies to establish vigilant supervision over the complete and exact fulfilment of collective agreements. This is carried out by the standing commissions of the factory or works committees jointly with representatives of the management.

At the end of each quarter there is a mass check on the collective agreements, in which not only all the standing commissions but the shop and departmental committees, trade union group organisers and all active trade unionists should take part. These quarterly mass checks considerably increase the effectiveness of the collective agreements. Control from below raises the sense of responsibility of management and union leaders for performance of the obligations entered in the agreement and helps the development of criticism and self-criticism of defects in management and trade union work.

The results of this mass check are discussed at a meeting of the factory and works committee, and also at a general meeting or delegate conference of the workers, following reports by the director of the works and the chairman of the works committee.

The mass check on agreements concluded in 1951 showed that the performance of the obligations undertaken had produced good results in plan-fulfilment and in further raising the material welfare and cultural conditions of the life of the workers. At the same time it revealed that there were serious defects in the work of both trade union and management sides. In a number of cases socialist emulation was not guided into a struggle for the improvement of quality, as the sixth plenary session of the Central Council of Trade Unions had demanded.

Individual Ministries—those of the Automobile and Tractor Industry, the Communications Industry, the Heavy Engineering Industry, the Transport Engineering Industry, the Machine-Tool Industry, the Timber Industry and Transport—and the Central Committees of the Unions concerned gave too little help to enterprises which were lagging behind.

Those in charge of some of the factories under the Ministry of Light Industry tolerated the output of sub-standard goods and became involved in the concealment of wastage.

In a number of enterprises of the coal and timber industries, and also at many building jobs, the work is badly organised, machines and mechanisms are idle too long, and individual groups of workers are not performing their quota.

Some business organisations do not properly carry out their obligations under collective agreements for the improvement of labour protection and safety technique, while the trade union organisations concerned fail to maintain the necessary pressure on them. In a number of industrial establishments the managements did not fulfil their obligations for improvement of housing and living conditions and cultural services.

As the Presidium of the CCPU noted, the non-fulfilment of these individual obligations was the result of the lack of proper attention by management and trade union leaders.

To put this right, it is necessary to have systematic and quarterly discussion of progress in carrying out collective agreements at meetings of the Boards

of Ministries, of presidiums and plenary sessions of trade union Central Committees, at meetings of trades councils, works committees and active trade unionists.

*Abridged from PROFESSIONALNYE SOYUZY, 1952, 2*

## OUR NEW COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT

**A. Kurnakov**

*Chairman of the Works Committee of the KRASNY PROLETARI  
Machine Tools Works, Moscow*



In January our works concluded its collective agreement for 1952.

The results of the 1951 agreement provided visible evidence of the great organising value of bi-lateral obligations. The works carried out its year's output programme ahead of time—by December 21. The obligation to reduce costs of production was over-fulfilled. Labour productivity rose by 11.3 per cent, though the agreement had provided for 9.8 per cent.

Today our workers have the job of providing industry not only with the latest model complex tools, but also with entire automatic lines of cutting tools.

When we began drafting the agreement for 1952, we thought out beforehand the volume and character of the preparatory work that was necessary, and adopted the plan for this at a meeting of the works committee. We laid down that everyone of our standing commissions should draft an appropriate section of the agreement together with representatives of the management. This they did by the dates fixed, and made their reports at a meeting of the works committee.

In drafting the first section, our production commission and the management's production and labour organisation departments were guided by the decision of the sixth plenary session of the Central Council of Trade Unions. They also took into account what the national economic plan for 1952 had laid down for our works. During recent years there have been substantial changes at the works. In the campaign for technical progress the socialist spirit of the workers, engineers and technicians has developed, the works has been equipped with highly productive machinery and as a result socialist emulation has risen to a higher stage, becoming more concrete and purposeful. Advanced workers in production constantly seek out new means of raising productivity at every stage. It was therefore quite to be expected that the production commission suggested the inclusion of supplementary clauses in the first section of the draft collective agreement—clauses aiming to promote the improvement of quality in output from socialist emulation. The more concrete character of these obligations is what distinguishes the 1952 agreement from its predecessors.

Here are a few characteristic clauses from the first section :

“ That the total number of sections where high-speed methods of work are practised be raised to 33, and departments of rapid methods to 9.

“ That the number of high-speed cutting tools be raised to 465 by July 1, 1952, and 480 by January 1, 1953, including 290 multiple tool lathes, 55 turret lathes, 3 vertical boring machines, 53 milling machines, 22 boring machines, 18 planing machines, 19 grinding machines, 20 drilling machines.

“ That the necessary conditions be provided making possible the combination of professions by individual workers and their taking over of respon-

sibility for several machines : the number of such workers being raised to 145 by July 1 and to 160 by January 1, 1953.

"That it be made possible for 76 sections and 26 departments to adopt collective Stakhanovite methods of work.

"By reducing losses from bad work, use of waste material and fulfilment of the plan of technical improvements, a 4 per cent economy in the use of metal, as against the established quota, shall be achieved.

"That not less than 62 sections and 20 departments reach a standard of excellent quality for more than 75 per cent of their output."

To make it easier to check every quarter how the collective agreement is being fulfilled, the agreement breaks down all the more important obligations for the year into quarterly targets. This will help the standing commissions of the works committee to determine more precisely how particular obligations are being carried out.

The wages commission had also quite a lot to do in drafting its section of the collective agreement. Active trade unionists made a careful study of the results of the wages provisions in the 1951 agreement. Over 76 per cent of our workers have been put on piece-rate, and two-thirds of them are working on the basis of technically standardised quotas. But there have been cases at the works of jobs not being issued before the commencement of working hours, and proper registration of hold-ups has not been organised.

Under the new collective agreement, the works committee has undertaken to supervise more carefully the application of the established wages systems, and to check the correctness of grading and the employment of workers according to their grade. The management has undertaken to transfer all jobs which can be subjected to cost accounting to a piece-rate basis, to increase the number of technically standardised quotas used in every possible way, etc.

The second section of the collective agreement also includes an obligation on the part of the management to fill up the wages books and return them to every worker two days before pay day.

We devote considerable attention to the raising of skill among our workers. Therefore the collective agreement contains a detailed and concrete programme in this respect. Stakhanovite schools, courses and technical circles will be arranged. There will be lectures, seminars and study courses at the works on the economics of production, the organisation of labour and labour legislation. The agreement provides funds also for the purchase of technical literature and the organisation of visits to other factories for the exchange of working experience.

A most important section of our collective agreement is that which contains mutual obligations for the further raising of discipline. The workers have undertaken not only to use all their working hours in production, as was laid down in the previous agreement, but also to produce high quality output, reduce its cost of production, and take great care of the equipment, tools, materials and other works property.

On the suggestion of the labour protection commission, new obligations have been included in the fifth section of the agreement. The management has pledged itself fully to use all the amounts provided by the State for the further improvement of working conditions. For this purpose 360,000 roubles have been provided in 1952—40,000 roubles more than last year. Their obligations in regard to eliminating the causes of sickness and accident have been extended. Every half-year there is to be refresher training of the workers in safety technique. Every month there is to be an analysis of sickness incidence, both for the works as a whole and for the individual shops and departments. The provision of grass plots throughout the works is planned.

The collective agreement for 1952 provides that the management shall

make it possible for young workers enrolled in the evening school to work in those shifts which leave them free to pursue their studies. It also undertakes that their holidays shall fall in the summer months.

The collective agreement provides specific obligations in respect of housing and living conditions. The State has allowed about two million roubles for new housing and repairs. The management has undertaken, when allocating housing space in the new block of flats, to separate out space for a crèche with 115 cots.

When the new draft collective agreement had been examined at a meeting of the works committee, we brought it up for discussion at trade union meetings of the workers in all shops and departments. Representatives of the works committee and management attended every such meeting. The meetings were extremely lively, 97 per cent of the workers attending. In the discussion about 200 suggestions and additions were brought forward. All of these were examined by the management and works committee, and many included, either in the collective agreement or in the plan of organising and technical work, which is attached to the agreement as an official document. A number of proposals not requiring large capital expenditure were introduced immediately by order of the director.

When the draft was under discussion the workers demanded that the works committee should pay more attention to the production conferences, and that members of the works committee should attend every shift production conference. It was also suggested that the management be bound to make an exact record of all the workers' suggestions made at the production conferences, and ensure their rapid application.

After this wide discussion of the draft agreement at departmental and shift meetings, the works committee once again carefully examined it together with the management, supplemented it with the workers' proposals and laid it before a trade union conference of the whole works for approval. The director and the chairman of the works committee reported on the results of the discussions throughout the works, and on the obligations being undertaken under the new agreement. The same meeting heard the results of the examination of the proposals made by the workers.

Delegates at the conference discussed the most varied sides of life at our works, and paid particular attention to the development of socialist emulation and the further improvement of cultural and welfare services. Many of their proposals were included in the collective agreement, and the text of some of the clauses was again altered. The conference delegates finally approved the draft collective agreement with all the amendments, alterations and additions that had been adopted. In its resolution the conference requested the works committee of the union and comrade Vorobyov, our director, to ensure better supervision over fulfilment of the new collective agreement, in order that the obligations undertaken should be performed exactly by the dates fixed.

The commissions of the works committee have worked out a precise plan of campaign to put all the clauses of the agreement into effect. The management has also drawn up a table of dates and persons responsible on its side.

We have supplied a printed copy of the new collective agreement for 1952 to every worker. The management and works committee will report every quarter to the workers how the bi-lateral obligations are being carried out. Large-scale participation of the whole body of workers in supervising fulfilment of the collective agreement will be a powerful means of carrying out the works plan and raising the welfare of the workers.

*Abridged from V POMOSHCH PROFISOYUZNOMU AKTIVU, February 1952.*

## FIRST RESULTS

A. Kurnakov



THE collective agreement for 1952 which was signed at the KRASNY PROLETARIJ works differs considerably from its predecessor. It pays particular attention to qualitative indices. The management this time, as well as the works committee, undertook serious obligations in regard to organising emulation. The clauses dealing with improvement in working conditions and cultural and welfare services have been made concrete. The agreement was used as the model for similar documents in other plants of the machine tool industry.

When the agreement was being signed, our workers were particularly critical of the works committee for having been lax last year in supervising fulfilment of the agreement.

The criticism was justified, and was taken note of. This year the works committee set about supervision immediately after the agreement had been concluded. The first mass check on its fulfilment, now going on at our works, has also been better organised. It was a great help that the agreement had been printed in sufficient numbers for each worker. Members of the works committee and chairmen of the shop committees gave talks on the purpose of the mass check to the trade union group organisers,\* social inspectors for labour protection,\* social insurance delegates\* and other active trade unionists, as well as the rank and file, and asked them to think over what had been said and make their proposals. In all shops there are placards and slogans calling for fulfilment ahead of time of mutual obligations in connection with the State plan. Our wall newspapers and the works printed paper have given us valuable help. More than 500 people are taking part in the mass check.

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THE Stakhanovites of the first machine shop proposed as early as January that there should be emulation in reducing the production cycle at all stages. The workers supported this valuable idea at general meetings and production conferences. The job of the works and shop committees was to organise this emulation properly, give it publicity, ensure wider adoption of the best experience, and help those lagging behind. All of this is provided for in the collective agreement.

At the end of February a meeting of the works committee discussed how the shop committee of one of the machine shops was organising emulation. We ascertained that the committee (chairman comrade Fadin, a machine-setter) had secured business-like recording of the results. Stakhanovite schools had been set up and old hands had taken responsibility for teaching newly engaged workers. Co-operation between the Stakhanovites and the technicians is improving. The works committee recommended all other shop committees to make use of this experience. At the same time we noted that the shop committee's standing commission on production and mass work was not doing much to popularise the achievements of the most advanced workers. This is now being remedied. A handsomely fitted-up honours board has been erected in the shop, and the wall newspaper is publishing articles about the best Stakhanovites.

Later the works committee discussed emulation in the first assembly shop. Things were not going too well here: there was no publicity, and the experience of more advanced workers was not being made known. The workers

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\* Each group of twenty workers (or thereabouts) elects three representatives to carry on spare-time work in these fields—and also a cultural organiser.



undertook individual obligations from time to time, but no one followed up their fulfilment. Those present at our meeting severely criticised the chairman of the shop committee, comrade Butonov (carpenter), and the chairman of the production and mass work commission, comrade Savichev (erector). They were told that their slackness was threatening to prevent fulfilment of most important provisions in the collective agreement.

The criticism helped. The shop committee noticeably improved its guidance of emulation. Stakhanovite schools are now working, and there are honours boards throughout the shop. Baikov, Timoshin, Bubnov (turners), Yeryzhkin (erector) and others spoke at production conferences of their experiences. All the workers have taken on individual obligations, and the shop committee and trade union organisers are following this up. In March the shop over-fulfilled its plan.

Many defects in the way emulation is organised are still being discovered in the course of the mass check. Thus in the press shop we found that no one was concerned with publicity for the results of emulation. Matters went so far that you could not get near the index board at all: a dump for spare parts had been created in front of it, and the entries were allowed to go out of date. Our activists immediately demanded that the shop manager, comrade Zhavoronkov, and comrade Lebedev, chairman of the shop committee, should put this right. The very same day the spare parts were shifted elsewhere, and the results of the work of those taking part in emulation are now regularly put up.

*Krasny Proletarii* works is famous for its remarkable inventors. Thirty-six workmen and technicians of our works have been awarded Stalin Prizes, and many have been given orders and medals. Hundreds of Stakhanovites are improving technique daily.

In fulfilment of one of the important provisions of the collective agreement, the works committee is organising the diffusion of this valuable experience. If a machine-tool man has achieved some new success, the trade union group organisers ask our technologists and foremen to draw up an individual chart of his methods, illustrated with drawings. Many such charts have been put up, together with the portraits of the Stakhanovites responsible, in the works club.

We use other methods as well—for example, comrade Viktorov, a Stakhanovite turner, explained his methods at a shop production conference: comrade Koznyakova, one of our advanced drilling machine operators, gave a talk on her methods over the works radio: comrade Vostrikov, machine setter, shared his experience in the works printed newspaper.

Studying this experience, our workers try to pull up to those most ahead. Productivity is growing from month to month. Last quarter it was nearly 20 per cent higher than in the same quarter of 1951. Our workers have produced seventy machine tools in excess of plan for the first quarter, lowering the costs of production considerably. Hundreds of thousands of roubles have been saved. Twelve shops and thirty-four sections have received the title of "excellent quality collectives".



THE mass check has shown us that other sections of the collective agreement are also being successfully fulfilled. In February the works committee considered how the plan of health measures, which was an annex of the agreement, was being carried out. As had been planned, new equipment had been acquired for the works health centre. But the active workers criticised its chief, comrade Tikhomirova, and others of our health service staff for not studying sufficiently the causes of illness. After the meeting our doctors were attached to particular shops, and began to visit the different sections there not less than



twice a week and to give talks on medical subjects. Measures for improving working conditions were adopted on their advice. As a result, the incidence of sickness among the workers fell in February, and still more in March.

Our active union workers have tried to find ways and means of putting some of the obligations into effect ahead of time. Thus the management was to put up a heat-preserving screen at the entrance to the forge shop in March. Comrade Zavidonsky, a member of our commission for labour protection, ascertained that this could be done earlier, and the works committee supported his proposal. The screen was put up a month ahead of time.

In the immediate future the builders will be handing over a large apartment house to the works. Our housing and welfare commission has already more than once checked on the quality of the work being done, and pointed out defects which the builders put right. At present the commission is assisting the management in the preparatory work for allocation of the housing space.

Not all the proposals made by the workers were included in the new agreement. The workers of the first machine shop asked for capital repairs to their Red Corner. The management said it had no funds ; but it was decided to do the job out of economies within the works. The works committee more than once reminded our director about this. Finally we managed to find the materials and building workers required, and the premises have been put in order : floors re-laid, walls painted and stage refitted.

THE most important obligations under the collective agreement are being successfully carried out. But the mass check shows at the same time that we still have plenty of defects, and serious ones at that. As I said earlier, the works has over-fulfilled its plan for output during the first quarter. But we did not cope successfully with the plan in respect of nomenclature of machine tools. Chiefly this is due to the fact that the management and the works committee have not yet succeeded in assuring a regular rhythm of production.

Again, the collective agreement states that the management undertakes in the first quarter to manufacture safety baffles for all turning lathes. It was the fault of comrade Surguchov, chief engineer, that this obligation had not yet been fulfilled. In this and in other respects the works committee did not press the management hard enough.

At present general meetings are taking place in all the shops at which the results of the agreement during the first quarter are being discussed. The critical speeches, advice and proposals from the workers will help both management and works committee.

*Abridged from TRUD, 25.4.1952*

# TRAINEE

## Boris Polevoi

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IT HAPPENED one night, when the day's progress reports had come in to the managing director's office from every corner of the vast construction site. At this hour the managing director, a famous Soviet engineer, met all his section directors and immediate subordinates, to outline and discuss the main tasks for the next day. On the site they call these short evening meetings the military council sessions, a jocular title that is suitable in that the intensity of life on the construction site is reminiscent of the activity during an offensive—here a peaceful labour offensive, unceasingly growing and developing and waged by night and by day.

At such an hour, late as it was, we asked the managing director of the site to provide us with a guide to show us over one of the main sectors where some major job was scheduled for the following morning. The director rubbed a big, strong, work-roughened hand over his high forehead, and said meditatively: "You'll have to go by yourselves, you know. All my people have got to be here at the meeting. Still—hold on a minute—there *is* somebody; a very serious person, but—"

His large, mild, steel-grey eyes, which, we had been told, always remained cool and calm even at the most difficult and critical moments, suddenly twinkled mischievously. He rang the bell, and when his elderly secretary appeared soundlessly at the door he said to her: "Get the trainee over here. If he has gone home, send a car for him." Turning to us, he added: "There's one condition attached, though. You're not to look surprised, and you're not to embarrass him by questioning him about himself. I'll explain it all later on."

The director's weary face looked cool and businesslike as usual, but the amusement in his eyes was plain. The door opened and a thin lad in a padded coat appeared. The coat, which was far too large, hung round him like a diving-suit, the sleeves not turned back but pushed well up. He looked about fourteen; his face was still childish, its solemn grown-up expression hardly matching the lavish freckles on his snub nose, the soft full lips and downy cheeks.

"May I introduce you?" said the director. "This is Konstantin Nikolayevich Yermolenko. Kostya. Our trainee. Kostya, will you take these three comrades to the concentration point for tomorrow? Show them everything."

The odd-looking trainee gave no sign of surprise. Carrying out requests of this kind was nothing out of the way apparently. He hitched up the outside coat with a boyish movement and said in the gravest way: "Very well. Come with me, please."

Our oddity proved himself truly invaluable. He talked about the construction scheme the whole way. Or more precisely, he did not merely talk—far from it; he answered all our questions most sensibly and accurately; never once was he at a loss. His knowledge of the site was excellent and he was quite aware of what someone who had come to see over it might consider new and interesting. His memory was astonishing. He did not trust to it entirely, however, for he took the job very seriously, and every now and then he fished in the pockets of the padded coat and dragged out a well-thumbed, dog-eared notebook from which to check names and figures.

What interested us most about our guide was the extent to which he had

integrated himself with the site; he thought of it as his own personal possession. He felt it his duty to explain everything to us in simple popular terms, regarding us, as new arrivals, with some condescension. We were informed, for instance, that the gigantic alluvial-earth dam might be compared to a mountain range, and that if all the metal-armature work so far used on the site were to be laid end to end it would reach for 15,000 kilometres (about 10,000 miles), and so on and so forth.

He was known and loved by everyone on the site. Some of the engineers we met passed the time of day with him, their lips curling faintly in mild irony. One of the heavy cement-carrier lorries pulled up beside him; the driver stuck his head out of the cabin and shouted: "You on your way to the settlement, Konstantin Nikolayevich? \* Jump in, I'll give you a lift as far as the cement-machinery centre."

When we had climbed to the top of the dam, where the thick-strewn lights of the site below looked like big yellow stars reflected in black waters, our young guide grew lyrical. Taking his bearings from signs in the scatter of lights whose meaning he alone perceived, he held forth about the construction site as if he could actually see beneath him the vast man-created sea, the lighthouses shining out at the ends of the jetties, the wharves and landing-stages for ships from the five seas to dock at, the storm shelters for shipping, and the ships themselves brought by man's will to rise and fall with the waves. His eager young heart was so utterly taken up with it that he did indeed see in the darkness enfolding the arid excavated steppe-land the whole completed job, though at that moment the buildings in fact existed only in sketches and blueprints. As he described it all, pointing here, there and everywhere with a thin, grubby, dirt-stained forefinger, the happy faith on his freckled face aroused our ungrudging admiration.

We remembered our promise not to ask our guide any personal questions, though the young enthusiast was interesting us more and more. We took our leave of him, thanking him gravely for the factual information and help he had given us, and rushed back to the director's office, where a light was still shining in the windows.

"Well?" he asked, raising his eyes from his papers. "Oh, marvellous! We've gathered the most tremendous impressions!" "No doubt. That isn't what I mean. How was our trainee? Showed you the whole thing, did he? Explained every bit of it?" "Look," we said, "won't you for heaven's sake explain? Where on earth did you dig him up? He's astounding!"

The director's eyes flickered, and we read in them a great knowledge of people, a great love and esteem for them. "Oh, we didn't have to dig him up. He came. Came under his own steam like everyone else. Pretty good, isn't he? He's not fifteen yet. When you and I were that age we were still rifling the larder for mother's jam. But Kostya—he's a positive encyclopedia of the site. He knows and dotes on every last bit of it. Every single thing fascinates him." "And why 'trainee'?" The director bent his attention on his papers for a while, then pushed them aside, apparently deciding that his working day (which had lasted till nearly sunrise) was now over. Slowly and with relish he told us the story of Konstantin Yermolenko, called "the trainee" by everybody on the site, management and all. It was quite an ordinary story, a normal story.

"Many people these days are finding themselves drawn to the great construction sites from the four quarters of the Soviet Union. Some of them long to add their own particular bricks to this historic piece of work. Others find the romance of the job attractive. Others again feel that here they will be better able to show what they can do. Some are attracted by the new, hitherto-

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\*This form of address, at once friendly and respectful, recognises him as an adult.

unknown trades and the technological scope of the work. And others—oh, yes, they exist—are moved simply and solely by the money incentive. The staff departments deal with sackfuls of written inquiries every day. We have dozens of specially trained people to verify the applicants' papers and fit the new arrivals into the work.

"Among such new arrivals was Konstantin Yermolenko. He was a sixth-year schoolboy; his father had been killed in the fighting near Rostov. Konstantin had decided that he would help to build the Volga-Don Canal. On the very first day of the school holidays he had boarded a steamer, remembering to take with him his school report, which said 'Progress excellent.' To tell the truth, he got on without a ticket and at the very first stop he was ignominiously thrown off. Nothing daunted by such travel difficulties, he walked some of the way, hitch-hiked on lorries going in his direction, reached the site, and presented himself at the staff bureau.

"They wouldn't give him a job. They told him, with good reason, that he was too young. So the lad managed to penetrate to the staff manager. He showed him his school report. He showed him an editorial in a *Komsomol* paper urging young people to help on the construction sites. But not even this editorial which had stirred his young heart made any impression on the staff manager, who remained perfectly adamant. The lad was not in the least deterred by this further rejection. He succeeded in making his way right into the private office of the managing director of the whole scheme. And there was my secretary saying 'Someone to see you', said the director, his mild bright eyes in strong contrast with his weary immobile face and customary businesslike tone. "'You know very well', said I, 'that taking people on isn't my job.' 'No,' said she, 'but do please spare a minute, all the same.' My secretary, by the way, is a severe and unemotional woman; but her voice was fairly throbbing with entreaty. I could see something out of the way was going on. 'All right,' said I, 'go ahead.' And in he came.

"Nowadays he's taken to wearing a great padded coat to make him look older. But then—what marched in was just a kid, a small boy. Made quite an entry, too; complaining of not being taken on. 'Quite right too', I retorted. 'You were born five or six years too late.' He fished out his school report, and his newspaper. The paper was getting pretty tattered by this time. His enthusiasm was plainly quite undamped. A fanatic. To tell the truth, I was quite won over already, but still I said: 'What's the hurry? There'll be work for you later on. Plenty more construction schemes coming along for your days. You've still got your lessons to get through.' But he went doggedly on, and what he said was reasonable enough: 'You take on students as trainees for practical work. Take me on as a trainee too. For the holidays.' He'd won. Damn it, I thought, I'll take him on, rules or no rules. So he started off as a messenger. And somehow or other, as you see, he's become one of our stalwarts. He's got a tidy mind. And a memory, my word!"

As we emerged, just before the sun rose, from the darkened building into the empty streets of the new settlement so recently sprung up on the steppe, the famous engineer thirstily gulped in the fresh country air with its frosty-water tang; he smiled dreamily, and said: "Think what people like him will be doing by the time they're fully grown!"

—Translated by ELEANOR FOX  
From *OGONYOK*, 1951, 46.

## M. M. MOROZOV

1891—1952

A Great Shakespearean

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WITH the death of Professor Morozov, European Shakespeare scholarship has lost a leading figure, the USSR an outstanding literary personality, and Anglo-Soviet cultural relations (in recent months through his work as editor-in-chief of the fortnightly journal *NEWS*) an indefatigable worker for peace and understanding. He was not only the leading Shakespearean scholar from his professorial chair at Moscow University, but also a prime mover in the production and interpretation of Shakespeare throughout the whole Soviet Union. In England too he had become widely known to the more enlightened public through his outstanding contribution to the annual *Shakespeare Survey* edited by Professor Allardyce Nicoll, and to the non-academic public through his stimulating little work *Shakespeare on the Soviet Stage*, introduced by our leading Shakespearean, Professor Dover Wilson.

Morozov's Russian version of *All's Well that Ends Well* was a pioneer in its combination of accuracy with literary sensitiveness. His *Shakespeare*—in the *Lives of Notable Men* series—and his brilliant chapters on Shakespeare and other Elizabethan dramatists in the Soviet Academy's *History of English Literature* (of which he was one of the editors), are perhaps his best work. But Russian schools and a wider public have gained much from his annotations and introductions to Russian translations such as Pasternak's *Hamlet*, and several editions of the English text of Shakespeare's plays such as *King Lear* have been made notable by his commentaries. Lately he had just completed a Russian version of *The Merry Wives of Windsor* in collaboration with S. Marshak. That his scholarship in English literature was of the widest was shown by the essay with which he introduced Marshak's famous translations of Robert Burns.

Great Britain's scholars and men of letters will join their Soviet *confrères* in mourning Mikhail Morozov, but also in rejoicing in his notable achievements and in the fact that he has helped us too to understand and value Shakespeare more justly.

C. L. WRENN.

## M. M. LITVINOV

1876—1951

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THE death of Maxim Maximovich Litvinov removed not only an old Russian working-class revolutionary (he joined the Kiev Committee of the Social Democrats in 1898, became a supporter of the "old", or Lenin's, *ISKRA* in 1902 and a Bolshevik in 1903), but also one whose life and work were

singularly connected with this country. After the first Russian Revolution of 1905 he lived and worked for many years in London. It was here that he became, in January 1918, the first diplomatic representative of the Soviet State, and was interned some months later. It was with a British representative, James O'Grady, that Litvinov signed in 1920 the first Soviet agreement (on exchange of prisoners) marking the final stages of Allied intervention. It was upon British representatives, at the Genoa and Hague Conferences of 1922, that Litvinov pressed his practical proposals for settling old differences, as a basis for economic collaboration, which could have given a different and more peaceful turn to relations between Soviet Russia and other countries. During his long years as spokesman for the USSR on disarmament, peace and collective security, particularly at Geneva (1927-1938), he was always deeply conscious of the passionate desire for peace cherished by the common people of Great Britain; and his speeches in English, full of common sense and dry wit, always brought him numerous and moving expressions of sympathy from them—as well as the respect of even the bitterest adversaries for his brilliance in debate and in statecraft.

A.R.

## **ALEXANDRA KOLLONTAI**

1872—1952

### *A Personal Reminiscence*

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DOUBTLESS the life, work and personality of Alexandra Kollontai will be commemorated by others better acquainted than I am with her national and international political life. My main contact with her was as a feminist, both in theory and in practice, in action and in expression. I had the honour of a private meeting with her during a brief visit of hers to London (in connection with the Fisheries Pact), and took her to see the Walworth Women's Welfare Centre, in which she showed great interest.

She was a truly constructive revolutionary, honest, full of courage, with profound human sympathy and unusual psychological perception. Her power of leadership and driving force had not obscured the gift of feeling or reasoning. She had a most expressive and individual speaking voice and a distinction of appearance and manner as impressive as her complete comradeship.

The Soviet Union, the cause of women throughout the world, and the cause of friendship and understanding between peoples, must mourn her loss, while remembering her with grateful pride.

F. W. STELLA BROWNE.



# Book Reviews

## A GOGOL SURVEY

PROFESSOR LAVRIN wears his learning lightly, and his short survey of Gogol's life and work\* affords an effortless and stimulating introduction to a strange character and a complex subject.

Gogol's psychological abnormalities undoubtedly influenced his writing, and a consideration of them is therefore pertinent to any study of his work. Nevertheless there is often a profound difference between the genesis of a work of art and its wider impact on the public, and it is in just this discrepancy that the dual character of Gogol's influence on Russian literature is to be found. However much the tormented "little man" and grotesque detail of the St. Petersburg tales influenced later writing, the main impact of Gogol's two major works, *The Government Inspector* and *Dead Souls*, on the reading public has undoubtedly been social. This was inevitable. In *Dead Souls* Gogol had intended to portray "all Russia" (letter to Zhukovsky from Paris, November 12, 1836), and whatever the manner of the portrait the subject alone—falling as it did on ground well prepared by the discussions of the thirties and early forties—would clearly have been interpreted, as indeed it was, both by apprehensive censor and by admiring reader *par excellence* Belinsky, as having social implications. This, Professor Lavrin suggests, was largely due to "something of a misunderstanding of the nature of Gogol's style." To prove his point he devotes his main attention to an examination of the psychological and literary main-springs of Gogol's work.

These have been the subject of continuing debate ever since V. Rozanov raised the issue of Gogol's "realism" by emphasising his hyperbolic method of creating character.† Professor Lavrin adheres to neither the "realist" nor the "irrealist" camp, but he sees in Gogol a frustrated romantic and disappointed moralist rather than a social satirist. The element of fantasy, strong in Gogol's tales, gave way, he suggests, not to satirical realism but to a stronger-than-life condensation of character intent on discrediting life rather than depicting it.

Certainly one cannot deny a subjective undercurrent in Gogol's work nor ignore the lyrical and grotesque elements in his style. Equally, however, one cannot neglect either Gogol's original description of the

subject of *Dead Souls* as "our landowners, our officials, our officers, our peasants, our peasant huts, in a word all holy Russia" (*ibid*) or his interest in Russian character. Gogol wrote in the same year: "Russian characters! our characters. Give us ourselves! ... How many good people there are in Russia, but also how many weeds. ... Put them on the stage. Let the public see them. Let the public laugh at them!" (*The St. Petersburg Stage*, 1835-6). "We should know already that only the true portrayal of characters, not in their general and established features, but in their national manifestation, which strikes us as a living likeness and makes us say 'Yes, I seem to know this man'—only such a portrayal will be of real use." (*St. Petersburg Notes*, 1836.)

Contemporaries, it is clear, reacted in just this manner to *Revizor* (*The Government Inspector*), so much so that in *The Nose*, also published in 1836, Gogol exclaims: "Russia is such an odd country that if you say anything about one collegiate assessor, all the other collegiate assessors from Riga to Kamchatka will inevitably take your remark personally, and the same applies to all other callings and ranks." Russia, clearly, recognized its devastating likeness. Belinsky hammered the point home because Russian life seemed to him to be the proper concern of Russian literature.

Later, Russian scholars made possible a fuller understanding of the different components of Gogol's style, and Professor Lavrin has skilfully embodied their findings in his exposition and commentary. By paying tribute to the fruits of Belinsky's interpretation, even while indicating its limitations, he shows himself well aware of the historical implications of his subject even if he does not develop them. The keynote of his own approach is psychological, but he does not force his views on the reader and generously gives him many indications that may lead him to different conclusions.

B. MALNICK

## OLD AND NEW IN TRANSLATION

GOGOL'S *Taras Bulba*\* has been reprinted at an appropriate time. While this volume contains some of Gogol's most important stories, they are selected disconcertingly at random. The introduction summarises some important points about Gogol's work, especially in relation to the extent of his folk-influence and his place in the history of the Russian novel. But

\*TARAS BULBA, and other tales. By N. V. Gogol. (Everyman, 5/-.)

\*NIKOLAI GOGOL: A Centenary Survey. By Janko Lavrin. (Sylvan Press, 12/6.)

† In two essays on his work appended to a study of Dostoevsky. "The Legend of the Grand Inquisitor" (1894).

the translation will not permit readers to judge these easily for themselves; it is stilted, unimaginative and often misleading. In future editions Everyman might remember that seventeenth-century Cossacks would not prelude their fights with words like "... let it be fisticuffs"—which is but an example.

Both the new Soviet publications, while presenting the same problems of translation, deserve to be popular. Sobko's novel† about the Soviet Zone of Germany is impressive and skilfully written; he paints a score or more memorable characters, Russian and German, in a small town in Saxony, and through their lives we see the major problems of post-war Germany. The total impression of real people doing real things is very vivid, and the particulars—especially the portrayal of the writer and the actress who reluctantly but eventually find for themselves a place in the new reconstruction—are very convincing.

When are *British* publishers going to remember again that there is such a thing as Soviet poetry? Where are our own translations of Simonov, Surkov, Lukonin...? Simonov probably most of all should be known in this country. In the original his poems are lyrical, every word seems natural and alive: this translation‡ of his series of poems on the international scene gives a good idea of the quality of this "poet-Communist", as the introduction calls him. There is anger and humour, description and comment in the poems: they show what Soviet poets are trying to achieve. As Surkov has said in a poem on the Pen-Club:

"To live for people, to speak with millions

Is the high peak of our desires." Soviet poetry has many voices, how soon will the others be heard?

HAROLD SILVER

†GUARANTEE OF PEACE. By Vadim Sobko. (Collet's/FLPH, 3/6.)

‡FRIENDS AND ENEMIES. By Konstantin Simonov, (Collet's/FLPH, 2/6.)

### EVERYBODY'S GOGOL

IN connection with the centenary of Gogol's death (1852-1952), now being commemorated in the USSR, many and various new editions of his works have been appearing lately. The total number of copies must run to millions judging from the figures quoted on the sample copies\* which I have before me: *Shinel*

\*SHINEL. By N. V. Gogol. (Gosizdat/Collet's, 6d.)

IZBRANNIYE PROIZVEDENIYA. By N. V. Gogol. (Moskovsky Rabochi/Collet's, 6/-.)

VECHERA NA KHUTORE BLIZ DIKANKI. By N. V. Gogol. (Gosizdat/Collet's, 2/6.)

(*The Overcoat*): 500,000 copies printed; *Evenings on a Farm near Dikanka*: 200,000 copies; *Selected works*: 75,000 copies. In spite of this mass production and the modesty of the price of the books, they have no unpleasant features of cheapness. The paper is good, the printing clear, misprints conspicuously absent. The two larger volumes are well and attractively bound, and the slender *Shinel* (6d. only) has a good engraving on its paper cover and has well-cut regular margins.

Special mention must be made of the footnotes. These show how much care has been taken to save from any perplexity the widest circle of readers (the *Selected Works*, for instance, have appeared in the *Collective Farmer's Library* series). Every specifically Ukrainian word is explained as a matter of course. But in addition there are also footnotes for obsolete administrative terms, many of which already puzzled readers at the beginning of this century, for historical terms (numerous in *Taras Bulba*, for names from art and literature (Horace, Perugino, Gerardo della Notte) and for some religious terms with which the younger generation in particular would not be familiar. For literary quotations the titles of the works from which they have been taken are given. Apart from their usefulness, the educational value of such footnotes is obvious. The foreign student will find them particularly helpful.

T. SHEBUNINA

### A USEFUL COLLECTION

IT IS a pleasure to find a collection of Slavonic studies nowadays (particularly when, like Professor Konovalov's handsome volumes,\* they treat in the main of Russian history, literature and language) which is not marred by a thick defensive overlay of vulgar abuse of the USSR or an equally repulsive assumption of superiority. True, Mr. D. Obolensky, writing on *Russia's Byzantine Heritage*, in Vol. I, has not been able to resist the combined attraction of the White-Guard, anti-national school of history ("Russia's parent civilisation was the Byzantine culture of East Rome", and so forth) and of easy journalistic sneers about "the exclusive truth of the Marxist Gospel". But this blotch only sets off to some advantage the value of the other contributions.

These are numerous and varied. Sir Maurice Bowra on *Pushkin*, in Vol. I, and Professor C. L. Wrenn on *Boris Pasternak*, in Vol. II, bring to their subjects deep affection, sensitivity and erudition which must be appreciated by lovers of Russian literature whatever their ideological differences. Professor Pascal, by

\*OXFORD SLAVONIC PAPERS. Ed. S. Konovalov. Vol. I, 1950, p. 129. Vol. II, 1951, p. 144. (Clarendon Press, 12/6 vol.)

no means a friend of Soviet reality, and writing of the tragic figure of Yessenin which fitted into it so badly, nevertheless refrains from making his essay on the poet's life and work into a political manifesto : and his article is well balanced by the late Dr. Bachtin, a devoted patriot far from his native country, in stimulating lecture notes on Mayakovsky. One of B. H. Sumner's last lectures—he did not live to correct the proofs—becomes, on the subject of *Russia and Europe*, a scholar's demolition of the anti-Russian and anti-Soviet slanders which try to present Russia as “outside the orbit of European civilisation”.

Mr. J. A. S. Simmons, who is in charge of Slavonic books at the Bodleian, contributes—personally or in combination with other specialists—three valuable studies on early Slavonic books, including “the first surviving grammar of the Russian, as distinct from the Slavonic, language”, published at Oxford in 1696, with plates printed from the original types. Professor Konovalov himself describes with his usual skill an attempt in 1617-18 to establish closer relations between the England of James I and the Russia of Tsar Mikhail Fyodorovich. He illustrates it with many unpublished documents, notably a diary by the English naturalist, John Tradescant the elder, of his voyage to Archangel and back in the summer of 1618.

*O si sic omnes.*

A.R.

### CARR ON EARLY SOVIET ECONOMY

THE second volume of Mr. E. H. Carr's history of Soviet Russia\* is a valuable contribution to the study of Soviet economic development. While he has neither Dobb's power of economic analysis nor Baykov's ability to summarise succinctly the essential problems, his detailed account of the economic policies and events of 1917-23 is a unique supplement to their work.

It provides abundant illustration of the general analysis already made by these pioneers† of the three periods it covers. These are: the establishment by Lenin and his colleagues in the first months of Soviet power of the main lines of their solution of, in Mr. Carr's words, “the cardinal problems of a proletarian revolution in a predominantly peasant economy” (dealt with in chapter 16); the consequent emergency measures of the Civil War, accelerating or violating the original programme for achieving a socialist economy (chapter 17); and, in 1921-23, the return, in the conditions of

devastation left by the Civil War, to building the economy roughly in accordance with the programme first laid down in early 1918 (chapters 18—20).

The first volume of Mr. Carr's history was justifiably criticised for its isolation of political development from the social and economic background. This structural weakness is manifested in the second volume by, for example, his failure to deal at all here with economic developments among the national minorities, the available material for which on 1922-3 is of great interest. However, he does demonstrate that the major political differences among the Russian revolutionaries in 1917-23 reflected the social and economic forces they represented. Thus he shows how “the rock on which the fundamental breach occurred” between Right and Left Socialist Revolutionaries, and between Left Socialist Revolutionaries and Bolsheviks, in 1917 and 1918 was that “the interests of different categories of peasants were plainly irreconcilable” (page 41); how Bukharin's “Left Opposition” of the spring of 1918 (which “shrank from producing any concrete programme”) was directed against Lenin's policy of consolidation of the gains of the Revolution (page 90); and how in the first months of the New Economic Policy after the Civil War the opposition of Trotsky on the one hand [he had demanded the “militarisation” of “the great masses of peasants” as well as of the workers (pages 213-27)] and of the syndicalists on the other, to Lenin's policies of voluntary membership of the Trade Unions and of persuasion rather than compulsion, within a framework of central directing of economic development, was “open to the . . . charge . . . of ignoring the peasant component in the Soviet power” (page 225). Mr. Carr also makes some comments on the economic aspects of Trotsky's differences with the other members of the Communist Party Central Committee in 1922-3, though his general attitude to Trotsky's policies in the early twenties is as yet unexplicit (pages 360-83).

In spite of its merits, the present volume suffers from certain faults, of omission rather than commission. It tends to be an account rather of economic policies and decisions than of actual economic development. This is reflected in his introductory chapter, which deals not with the pre-revolutionary economy of Russia (except incidentally) but with “theories and programmes”. There is no adequate description of the development of industry and the labour movement, of banking and public finance, of agriculture, or of trade, in the pre-war years; and little is said about the state of the economy between the two revolutions of February and October 1917. In consequence we are left with a hazy impression of the economy

\*THE BOLSHEVIK REVOLUTION, 1917-1923, Vol. II. By E. H. Carr. (Macmillan, 30/-) (1952.)

†M. H. Dobb: Soviet Economic Development Since 1917. (1948.)

A. Baykov: The Development of the Soviet Economic System. (1946.)

on the eve of the Bolshevik Revolution, and of the short-term and long-term factors operating on it; and as a result Mr. Carr's discussion of Bolshevik policy after the Revolution is to some extent abstracted from reality. This defect has its effect on the later period too. For example, his account of the taxation policy of 1921-3 is not related to the pre-war taxation system, when in fact many measures (e.g. the *promnalog*, the "tax on industry" of page 347) were an application in a new situation of long-established methods. It is difficult to see how, having failed to sketch in this background, Mr. Carr is going to discuss the struggles to carry out Bolshevik economic policy through and in spite of the financial and economic experts taken over from tsardom.

It is also to be regretted that while his treatment of the Civil War years is full enough, Mr. Carr, perhaps through shortage of space, has skimmed the vital early years of NEP, devoting to them only about one hundred of nearly four hundred pages. Because of this, the section on finance in 1921-3, for example, is far from adequate; he says nothing about excises and other indirect taxes (on which more than a dozen decrees were issued in 1922 alone), although they occupied a larger share in revenue than direct taxes in the "orienting budget" for 1922; his account of the finances of industry is confused and contains several mistakes (page 347); he is satisfied with a brief mention of the growth of local finance, ignoring the important measures of December 1922.

Certain of the detailed points made by Mr. Carr may be valid, but they are inadequately documented. Thus, he offers no evidence to show that armed detachments went to the villages in March 1918, and that they "encountered bitter resistance" (page 49); or that there was in early 1918 "an extremely powerful sentiment among the Bolshevik leaders, and still more, the Bolshevik rank and file" which "held up equality [of wages] as an ideal" (page 113).

In sum, however, Mr. Carr has opened a new chapter in British studies of the early years of the Russian revolution. He has certainly mastered a large mass of material. His sources include not only the books and periodical literature of the time, but also recent Soviet studies based on unpublished archives. There remains to be undertaken further detailed research into particular aspects of the economy, using specialised publications as well as the wealth of material in the files of daily newspapers, hardly touched by Mr. Carr. A complete history of the period would also need to deal with cultural and educational developments, which do not appear to come within Mr. Carr's present scheme.

R. W. DAVIES.

## MAKARENKO ON RE-EDUCATION

IN THIS classic and popular Soviet epic,\* now fully translated into English, A. S. Makarenko (1888-1939) imaginatively set out his experiences and reflections as a teacher of the delinquent and homeless young people who had increased in vast numbers during the Civil War period, and revealed what responsible life and joyful fellowship in a collective organisation came to mean for so many of them.

Makarenko believed in the tremendous power of correct education and in the importance of learning "how to combine the most exacting demands upon the pupil with the utmost respect for his personality." In the makeshift conditions of the dilapidated ex-reformatory in the Kharkov area of the Ukraine which housed his first colony in 1920, this faith—and even an occasional outburst of furious physical violence—proved more effective than fashionable pedagogical theories in overcoming the resistance to labour, let alone study, shown by aggressive young people, "grown savage in their own egoism", and prone to insolence, idleness, thieving, bullying, hooliganism, gambling, drunkenness, anti-semitism and brawling with the local villagers. The prevailing atmosphere gradually improved, through organised collective action against highway bandits and criminal kulaks; through the creation of better amenities by the colonists themselves; through the leadership and example of teachers with the ability, endurance and patience to build up mutual respect between themselves and their charges; through the appointment of local peasant instructors and an exacting expert agronomist; and through the acquisition of horses, farming equipment, and a new home with arable land on a former aristocratic estate.

Besides classroom training there was soon a library; dramatic and other cultural circles; an inspiring correspondence with Maxim Gorky (after whom the colony was named); increasing local contacts; a Komsomol unit; and a regular system of organised group detachments led by "commanders" who formed a council responsible for discipline and labour.

Some of the colonists failed to make good. A sporting interest in crime died hard; new intakes brought new problems, including sexual and marital ones. Once the despairing director even contemplated suicide. Some punishment had to remain, in the form of solitary confinement, deprivation of normal food, and the threat of expulsion—alongside the incentives of competitive group labour, differentiated praise and blame, appeals to collective duty and group honour, the introduction of military

\*THE ROAD TO LIFE: An Epic in Education. By A. S. Makarenko. (Collet's/FLPH, 3 vols. 12/6.) [Russia Today Book Club extra at 8/6.]



drill and formal ceremony, and the life of shared poverty and co-operative toil in the struggle to improve material conditions.

The resulting initiative and adaptability of the colonists was seen not only in their later educational achievements and careers, but also in the re-organisation by Makarenko and his leading detachments of the demoralised Kuryazh colony, where he remained until official pedagogical opposition to his "strict" methods forced his resignation in 1929. He continued, however, to apply and to write about his system in a new model colony under a different authority.

His ultimately successful struggle to prove the soundness of the methods he had found effective in the conditions of actual Soviet life, and his faith in the creative possibilities of disciplined and purposeful collective organisation, in the process of building which the members would change themselves, is in itself a splendid example of the dynamic resilience of Soviet society. The persistent opposition to his system shows how long old concepts can prevail despite changes in the economic and political structure of society. Makarenko believed ideas of pre-determined human types, or of inherent goodness or badness in human nature, to be unrealistic, and considered that anarchistic methods of "free" education independent of positive adult influence or any code of punishment would make for laxity and not initiative. His approach was not the "play way" but the way of work. He saw his colonists as products of specific social experiences who—although "all good for something"—had to be actively trained through new collective experiences to become responsible Soviet citizens.

Since all achievement involves arduous and unpleasant labour, productive tasks combined with schooling would, he knew, help to develop a strong sense of duty. A buoyant and confident tone needed, however, not only mere material satisfactions but a consciousness of ever-broadening and not-too-distant prospects of joyous collective achievement in a community with its own style of ordered living. Such collective organisation of work and culture could be built up through friendly group competition, through a military-like routine and organised ceremonial, and through the active drive and example of the teachers and leaders. Even the most apparently hopeless newcomers could be rehabilitated, without formal psychological tests, through their response to the needs and problems of such a collective in a socialist society.

Makarenko's stimulating commentary on much Soviet educational thought and practice deserves serious study by all who are concerned with problems of juvenile delinquency or of moral and civic education generally.

E. PAYNE

## THE GEOGRAPHY OF RUSSIA AND ASIA

MORE accounts of the geography of the USSR seem to reach us from across the Atlantic than from elsewhere at the present time. They are none the less welcome for that, and especially when they come from geographers who have an understanding of Russian. N. T. Mirov\* has used Russian sources, principally by Berg, Baransky, Dobrynin and Suslov, for his own synthesis of the geography of Russia. Perhaps the title of the book is a misnomer in some respects, for the author is almost exclusively concerned in this book with the physical landscape of the Soviet Union, and there is but passing reference to man and his activities and the general demographic pattern. The work is comprehensive and systematic, and the aims enunciated by the author have been achieved, for he has deliberately steered a course between the advanced and detailed works of L. S. Berg and the popular works of less competent authorities. Although intended for the sixth-form or university student, there is much of interest in the book for the inquiring layman.

The first half of the book is concerned with a general picture of the country; this is followed by an account of the people, their languages and religions. In this latter connection it is most interesting to see a map of the Distribution of Blood Groups, based on data from Caudela. On the other hand, the unit-dot map of population on p. 62 is less useful. The greater part of the book, comprising some 262 pages, is concerned with a formal treatment of the climate, topography, soils, vegetation, animal life, and people, which coincides with the general format of Berg's *Natural Regions*.† This plan has advantages when the book is used for reference, but it can be rather boring after a while.

The maps are good, especially those based on Suslov's work, which show the detailed trend-lines of the main mountain structures. It is to be regretted that it had not proved possible to illustrate the work with recent photographs of the many and varied landscapes of the USSR.

Mirov has helped the English reader by translating many of the Russian proper names, which gives an added interest to the names of places, mountains and hills, and also by giving the climatic statistics for typical stations in each of the natural regions in English units.

We are reminded of the relationship of the Soviet Union with the rest of the continent of Asia by *The Changing Map of Asia*.‡ This is a political geography, and the

\*GEOGRAPHY OF RUSSIA. By N. T. Mirov. (John Wiley and Sons, N.Y., \$6.50, and Chapman and Hall, 52/-.)

† Reviewed in "Anglo-Soviet Journal," Vol. XII, No. 2 (Summer 1951).

‡ THE CHANGING MAP OF ASIA. Ed. W. G. East and O. H. K. Spate. (Methuen, 25/-.)



editors have achieved their avowed task with considerable success. With the collaboration of four other authors they have attempted to survey the political geography of South-West and South-East Asia, Soviet and High Asia, India, Pakistan and the Far East, and to discuss the complex internal and international problems of the moment against this background. It is apparent that the authors seem in happier vein when they place the emphasis on the geography rather than on the politics.

Despite the uncertainty of statistics in this geographic realm, the factual basis of the book has been enhanced by thirty-four maps and some thirty tables which elucidate trends of population and production.

Professor East has given us a lucid and at the same time an amazingly full account of Soviet Asia. In a short essay of some sixty pages the essential features of the geographical and historical backgrounds are presented in masterly fashion. He then proceeds to discuss the major developments in agriculture, industry and transport. Several references to Mackinder's geopolitical theories and his concept of the "Heartland" are made throughout the book, and it is salutary to be reminded that neither this nor the other alleged absolutes of Asia will help in the impossible task of predicting the future of this part of the world.

That the book goes far to give a clear picture of the stage upon which political man is skirmishing there can be no doubt; and just as the USSR is too large to be omitted from our studies, so we cannot afford to be unmindful of the main geographical factors which are interwoven in the pattern of the life of the other half of mankind living on a third of the earth's surface.

G. D. B. G.

### RUSSIANS IN AMERICA

IT is a pleasant surprise, in these days, to find a work of Soviet historical scholarship coming to us by way of America, but it cannot be said that it\* arrives in a very attractive dress. The typography and general appearance of the book are distressing, misprints abound, and, a far more serious matter, the quality of the translation is extremely poor, stiff at the best and frequently hopelessly unidiomatic. The production of this book is in every respect far below what we in Britain are accustomed to expect from any of our major university presses.

This is all the more regrettable because its matter is excellent, and will, I imagine, be new to most readers. It tells the story of the formation and fortunes of the Russian-American Company, formed in 1799 in imitation of the English and Dutch East India Companies, to exploit and

\*THE RUSSIAN-AMERICAN COMPANY.  
By S. B. Okun. Trans. Carl Ginsburg.  
(Harvard University Press, \$4.50.)

administer the Russian colonies in North-West America and to act as a cover for the expansionist plans of the Tsarist government in this region.

Though it penetrated at times as far as California and Hawaii, the company failed in the long run and was liquidated when Alaska was sold to the USA in 1867. The reasons for the Russian failure to consolidate the foothold appear clearly enough in Okun's narrative. There was first the economic backwardness of the metropolitan country, its restricted home market and its negligible industrial exports, its poor techniques and the serfdom which made it difficult to find colonists. Then there was the corruption and graft of the courtiers and nobility, who soon ousted the politically weak merchants from the management of the company. At no time were its settlements honestly or efficiently administered, while the native populations and the natural resources were recklessly exploited. A third reason was the preoccupation of Tsarism with Europe and the Middle East, and there was finally the growing strength of the USA, whose citizens were able to occupy the lands which the company had had to leave empty.

Okun presents a thoroughly documented and classic picture of the older style of colonialism, and there are a number of points of special and wider interest. Among these are the account of the close connection between the company and the Decembrists, light on Anglo-American relations in the middle of the nineteenth century and a very odd deal between the Russian-American Company and the Hudson Bay Company on the eve of the Crimean War.

A. L. MORTON

### USEFUL GRAMMAR

ENGLISH has a distinction of meaning (expressed through the use and non-use of the easy and regular *-ing* form) corresponding broadly to the Russian *perfective* and *imperfective* "verb-aspects"; it has, however, nothing corresponding to the Russian *determinate* and *indeterminate* forms of certain common verbs, the distinction for example between "go *once in particular*" and "go *in a general sense*"; nor is there in English any distinction in the verb "go" between going *on foot* and going *not on foot*. As Leon Stilman\* rightly says, it is not possible to give these verbs sufficient treatment in elementary grammars, and he has devoted a monograph to them, with the primary purpose of supplementing practical grammars, but his work will be useful equally to the elementary student and to the theoretician of Russian and comparative grammar.

He begins by setting out the conjugation

\*RUSSIAN VERBS OF MOTION; Going, Carrying, Leading. By Leon Stilman. (Columbia University Press and Geoffrey Cumberlege, 8/-.)

of the forms and showing how the formal differences between the two in each verb follow a general pattern. (The different pattern of the additional verbs on p. 64 is not brought out, however.)

The distinction between determinate and indeterminate is explained as between motion in a definite direction and motion in no definite direction or habitual or "there-and-back" motion. Additional uses of the determinate, for progressing, performing, raining, and so on, are given (pp. 5, 6) without noting that they are all "going" in one direction—which is particularly clear in *leto shlo k kontsu*, "summer was coming to an end". (Similarly [p. 18] "conduct", "keep a diary", and conversely [p. 15] "wear", indeterminate because not taking anywhere.)

Throughout Part 1, which presents the basic distinction in different verbs with and without prefixes, there are ample exercises in their use. Part 2 deals with more advanced problems: idiomatic uses, (slightly) less common verbs of the same type, and details of prefixation. The clear exposition, paralleled by clarity of layout and typography unusual in a non-printed publication, is aided by diagrams, symbols (in the exercises) for the different kinds of going, and the equally excellent device of glossing in smaller type difficult words in the examples.

It is stated (pp. 6, 12) that the determinate present of certain verbs is used for the future as well as the prefixed perfective, without making it clear that the imperfective present of all verbs may be so used. Historically, it is true, the determinate of these verbs of motion corresponds to some of the forms giving the modern perfective (of which the "present" is usually future) of verbs in general, and is itself found also in perfective use in some Slavonic languages. But it is fallacious to suppose that in English, for example, the future use of the present ("continuous"), "I'm doing that tomorrow", originated in the verb of motion "am going (to)".

However, while it is always easy to say what more might have been put in, nothing that is in this work can be received with other than praise.

J. ELLIS

### STANISLAVSKY IN RETROSPECT

JUST over fifty years ago, Nemirovich-Danchenko and Stanislavsky collaborated to produce Chekhov's *The Seagull* for their newly formed company, later renowned as the Moscow Art Theatre. The chief merit of this new book on that production\* is not in Stanislavsky's production-notes, with diagrams (or "score", as he preferred to call it), invaluable though

\*THE SEAGULL PRODUCED BY STANISLAVSKY. Ed. S. D. Balukhaty. Tr. David Magarshack. (Dennis Dobson, 25/-.)

it is; his vivid imagination led to some misinterpretations. (Chekhov disapproved of some of the additional production effects included by Stanislavsky to help create the mood of the scene.) And eager Stanislavskites must not be misled by the "blurb" on the dust-jacket claiming that this preliminary score "removes any insuperable difficulties a small company may experience in putting on *The Seagull* at short notice and with little time or opportunity for a closer study of the play." One has only to read a paragraph in Mr. Herbert Marshall's excellent Postscript, or part of Professor Balukhaty's Introduction, to realise the inaccuracy of this statement, so contrary to Stanislavsky's mature convictions.

This Introduction (never before translated into English), giving a description of the gross misrepresentation the play suffered when first produced by another company (in 1896), the great part Nemirovich-Danchenko played in gaining Chekhov's somewhat reluctant permission to re-produce the play, and in influencing Stanislavsky, who was at first even more reluctant to collaborate on the production; and lastly a meticulous analysis of Stanislavsky's production technique (which he was later to evolve so differently)—it is all this which makes the book of inestimable value. Here is a complete picture of Stanislavsky's initial realisation of his own artistry in relation to Chekhov's; he fell "involuntarily under the spell of the play", and when writing the score relied solely on his creative intuition. His artistic integrity made him self-critical of this, and since he worked on the score before rehearsals began, it is possible that many of his ideas were dropped during subsequent stages of work on the play. Full appreciation of the play came to him later. Here is Stanislavsky's undistilled creative art, on the threshold of complete realisation of his powers, a perfect embryo of the greatness to come. His personal integrity enabled him to appreciate the enormous debt he owed—and always acknowledged—to that other genius Nemirovich-Danchenko.

So lucid is Mr. Magarshack's translation of Professor Balukhaty's historical survey, that through its mass of documentation emerge fascinating portraits of three great artists. By the time one comes to the play itself (printed alongside the complete "score"), one senses something similar to the excitement that pervaded the audience at that momentous first night in 1898.

Mr. Magarshack's new translation of *The Seagull* itself is in some ways less successful. Though never guilty of anachronism, he too frequently, for all his intended faithfulness to the author, writes two words where, one cannot help feeling, one would do. It is one thing to substitute words for others which today would convey an inaccurate, perhaps ludicrous, meaning; additional colloquialism for its own sake

is another. In endeavouring to avoid the stilted, Mr. Magarshack gives us a sprinkling of such phrases as *You see*; *I'm afraid*; *Well, you know*; or just plain *Well*. But Chekhov was a subtle playwright who avoided superfluities. He wished to portray "Life as it really is and people as they really are." The point is, does Mr. Magarshack give us Chekhov's characters as they really are? One suspects that Chekhov would have agreed with Stani-slavsky, who "had no desire to rival my grandchildren" and said (in another context) "each generation has its own limitations".

Mr. Magarshack's sensibility to atmosphere is more highly developed than his sense of individual character: the shades of introvert and extrovert are not fully resolved (this is particularly apparent with Masha and with Konstantin). For instance, in the opening speeches of Act I he substitutes intellectual logic for emotional truth. An exceedingly difficult and delicate task, however, is presented to a translator of this play. It is to Mr. Magarshack's great credit that he largely succeeds in surmounting the problem.

L.R.

#### LITTLE-KNOWN RUSSIAN LITERATURE

THE Department of Slavonic Studies of Columbia University is to be congratulated on making available to students and lovers of Russian literature material that is otherwise unobtainable. This anthology\* will be particularly welcome to students as it provides important and interesting extracts from the works of the authors who laid the foundations of Russian letters, but who have been so completely overshadowed by their great successors of the nineteenth century that not even their names are known outside Russia.

In his extremely enlightening introduction, Mr. Clarence A. Manning, the editor of the anthology, traces the development of Russian literature and the influence of the European literary traditions upon it. Though mainly derivative and often slavishly imitative and eclectic in character, this literature already contains much that is original and independent of its non-Russian sources. Most fascinating are the first naive attempts at dramatic expression, such as the *Interludia* and *Inter-media*, that is the comic scenes introduced into the early Russian school dramas and miracle plays. The editor has also very wisely included a sample of Sumarokov's plays (the tragedy *Sinav and Truvor*), which exercised a great influence on the Russian stage for a much longer time than is generally realised.

The anthology includes a few highly interesting extracts from Catherine the

Great's writings (which are remarkable not only for their mother-wit but also for their excellent style), as well as a most judicious selection of Lomonosov's writings. All in all it offers the English student, in addition to the works of the authors already mentioned, extracts from eight other authors, namely Simeon Polotsky, who introduced the Kievan culture into Moscow and can be regarded as the founder of the new influences in early Russian literature; Ivan Pososhkov, whose main work, *The Book on Poverty and Riches*, sheds an interesting light on the attitude of the more enlightened representatives of the mercantile classes to the reforms of Peter the Great; Teofan Prokopovich, a zealous supporter of these reforms, whose funeral oration on Peter the Great is reproduced in the anthology; Vasili Tatishchev, a product of the new educational reforms introduced by Peter the Great, whose *Spiritual Testament and Conversation on the Advantage of Knowledge and Schools* (reproduced in the anthology) shed a new light on the revolutionary ideas that these reforms were instrumental in producing; Antiokh Kantemir, a friend of Teofan Prokopovich and the author of pseudo-classical satires of a highly moralising character; Vasili Trediakovsky, another poet whose importance lay in the innovations which he made in the traditional Russian poetry and his work in the theory of Russian verse; Nicholas Novikov, the foremost educator of his time in Russia and the foremost progressive thinker in his appreciation of the real need of the Russian people and the Russian State, whose *Satirical Journals* enjoyed the patronage of Catherine the Great; and, lastly, an exciting folk tale of the period of Peter the Great.

DAVID MAGARSHACK

#### SOME MUSICAL INFORMATION

IN Mr. Martin Cooper's fifty-six indexed pages\* much factual information about opera in Russia is marshalled more accessibly than in Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians. There is a sympathetic appreciation of Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin*. So far so good.

Unfortunately, however, Mr. Cooper ventures beyond this familiar ground in an effort to evaluate the operatic situation in the Soviet Union today. A couple of quotations suffice to illustrate his method here. Kabalevsky's opera *Colas Brugnon*, writes Mr. Cooper on p. 64, "which sounds in other ways attractive work, appears to have been spoilt by politics. I have not been able to see a score." This is the first example I know of where a music critic has expressed an opinion about a work of which he states he knows nothing. On p. 62, Mr. Cooper describes the audience for which Soviet operas are

\*RUSSIAN OPERA. By Martin Cooper. (Max Parrish, 7/6.)

written as having "a primitive and rather clumsy type of intelligence". As this audience consists of the people who are engaged, among other things, in changing the climate of a vast area of land, in using atomic energy to move mountains, and in creating new species of animals and plants, while absorbing in their spare time the works of Shakespeare, Cervantes, Dante, Goethe, to say nothing of Turgenev, Tolstoy and other primitive and clumsy artistic fare, Mr. Cooper's description may perhaps be explained, though it cannot be excused, by his ignorance of the facts of the situation, ignorance which in this matter remains unacknowledged, perhaps unrealised, by him.

Twenty-eight illustrations, reproducing original pictures and designs from the eighteenth century onwards, enliven this elegantly printed booklet.

ALAN BUSH

### THE CHEKHOV MYTH

A MYTH has grown up in this country about Chekhov which has resulted in his misrepresentation on the stage. That myth, fostered by the critics, is a twofold one. In the first instance it is summed up bitinglly by Mr. Magarshack\*: it is to the effect that Chekhov's plays, lacking form and structure, depend for their artistic appeal on "a welter of half-tones and feelings too exquisite for anyone but [the critics] themselves to detect." The second part of the myth is contained in the words of a well-known critic quoted by the author—that Chekhov is "the poet and apologist of ineffectualness."

Mr. Magarshack has produced a work that ought to dispose finally of both these misunderstandings. Yet so rooted is the Chekhov myth in the fears and fancies of the orthodox critics that his efforts in certain cases seem to flow like water off a duck's back. The critics of both *The New Statesman* and *The Listener* have apparently turned a blind eye to his unimpeachable demonstration that Chekhov set out to portray life, not merely as it is, but as it should be.

Are there any possible grounds in the author's exposition for this continued obtuseness? Mr. Magarshack has quoted extensively from Chekhov's correspondence to show how he developed the belief that art must serve a purpose in life. This the reviewers accept, but will not agree that Mr. Magarshack has proved that Chekhov put his principles into practice.

In his brilliant analyses of *The Seagull*, *Uncle Vanya* and *The Three Sisters* the ethical elements in these works are implicitly revealed as an integral part of their aesthetic fabric and structure. It is perhaps partly due to the fact that Mr. Magarshack is not more explicit here, that

\*CHEKHOV THE DRAMATIST. By David Magarshack. (John Lehmann, 21/-.)

the reviewers can still bury their heads in the sand.

But the matter goes somewhat deeper. Mr. Magarshack admits that his purpose has been "to provide an analysis of the development of Chekhov's art as a dramatist and, particularly, of the 'architecture' of his great plays." If he had laid an equal emphasis on the content of Chekhov's work, on the ideas with which Chekhov built, I believe his study would have had even greater force and effect. As it is the reader is left with tantalizing glimpses which he would like to follow up, but is hurried on to fresh "architectural" subtleties.

For instance, the hint is more than once given that Chekhov's development as a great artist in his field was in fact integrally bound up with his recognition that art should serve to teach men to live in a better way—that the form of his indirect-action plays evolved as a result of the development of his outlook and purpose in life. But the suggestion hangs in mid-air. Much material is there, but the argument is not carried through.

Again the suggestion was made that at the root of Chekhov's whole scale of values is his faith in socially useful work—even, if necessary, of a political character. This is profoundly true of Chekhov's development and we should be grateful to Mr. Magarshack that he has touched on the subject. But he could have elaborated this theme more fully, especially in his analysis of *The Seagull*. It would have given an even broader understanding of the play and of Nina's and Konstantin's characters.

The fact is that the author does not develop his argument as fully as he might have in regard to the interdependence of Chekhov's moral outlook and artistic method. Nor does he use some very telling material on Chekhov's purposefulness. Why, when Mr. Magarshack is at pains to emphasise this aspect of his life does he refer to Suvorin as Chekhov's "lifelong friend" and never enlighten the reader as to the break made with Suvorin's paper in 1893 and his actual, if not formal, estrangement from Suvorin in 1898 over a politico-moral issue—Suvorin's complicity in the scurrilous anti-semitic propaganda in his press in connection with the Dreyfus case?

But here we touch on the real weakness that handicaps an admirable purpose. Mr. Magarshack has given quite inadequate incidental glimpses of the historical background which alone can explain the development of Chekhov the man and the artist. Had this background been provided the author could, for instance, have given us a far more satisfying treatment of *The Cherry Orchard* than the present analysis, which is somewhat summary in character. Here again Mr. Magarshack rouses the appetite of the reader for more only to finish off with a damp squib—he washes



his hands of the good work he has begun by writing the play off as a loss to the philistine critics.

Incidentally, why does the author give no material on the interpretation of Chekhov's drama in the Soviet Union?

When all is said and done, however, Mr. Magarshack has made a great and welcome contribution to our literature on Chekhov. It may well prompt producers to attempt to give us Chekhov as Chekhov would have wished. A tremendous amount of study and scholarship has gone into this work, and yet it remains a fascinating book that is hard to put down. No lover of Chekhov or of Russian literature and theatre can afford not to read it and if he cannot afford the price he should make a point of demanding it from his library.

E.H.

### SPECTRE OF PROSPERITY

HERE\* is the answer to *Collier's* war propaganda. Nineteen people from various walks of life and various parts of the USA, trade unionists, housewives, teachers, office workers, clergymen, doctors, scientists; ten white and nine coloured; a cross-section of the masses of Americans who in the last analysis will decide the fate of their nation. These nineteen people and others like them are slowly but surely carrying the truth to their people. A socialist way of life has given the Soviet people a continuously rising standard of life; educational, medical, cultural and industrial facilities far superior to anything the American people have ever known; full employment and security: in fact everything the American people desire. This book is a powerful weapon for peace and friendship between the nations, and should be in the hands of all fighters for peace. Having myself recently visited the USSR, I can vouch for the truthfulness of the report, and strongly recommend it.

Clr. EDWARD DIXON (Coventry)

\*WE SAW FOR OURSELVES. Report of the nineteen Americans on their visit to the USSR. (New World Review, 25c.)

### RELIGION UNDER THE SOVIET ORDER

THE first of these pamphlets\* gives a good, general, factual picture of the relations existing today between the Soviet State and the various churches and other religious organisations within its borders. While it cannot be said to provide any new information, I know of no other pamphlet which sets out the main facts so clearly. Though no attempt is made to give a complete historical outline of the relations between Church and State in Russia since 1917, a certain amount of historical background to the present situation is provided. For instance, it is certainly worth while for

\*FREEDOM OF RELIGION IN THE USSR. By G. Spasov. (Soviet News, 2d.)

British people to remember what the Soviets inherited in the way of Church-State relationships from Tsarist days. The measures separating Church and State and Church and School are summarised. The freedom of religious bodies not only to worship but to preach, teach, train their ministries, and publish the Bible, the Koran and other religious books, and also journals, is well and simply described. The patriotic role of the Church in World War II and its severe sufferings at the hands of the German fascists (now to be re-armed to defend "Christian civilisation") are recalled. The initiative of the Church in the struggle for peace today is rightly stressed as an example of how religion, while non-political, brings its influence to bear where a moral issue is concerned; and indeed May has seen another peace conference of all faiths in Moscow.

The second pamphlet† gives a very full account of some little-known, numerically small, but very active Protestant bodies in the USSR. These were all restricted under the Tsars and suffered grave disabilities from which they are now freed, thanks to Soviet religious policy. The pamphlet is a translation of a Hungarian document, the Hungarian Protestants themselves providing one of the most interesting examples of a Church flourishing in a communist-led State. The double transliteration of Russian proper names via Hungarian has in some cases produced some unusual spelling, but apart from this the pamphlet is to be recommended as giving a great deal of information about a little-known subject.

OLIVER FIELDING CLARKE

†EVANGELICAL CHRISTIANS IN THE SOVIET UNION. Ed. The Rev. S. Evans. Feb./Mar. issue of "Religion and the People," double number 8d.)

### QUESTION AND ANSWER

THE question raised by Prof. Carr's new book\* is whether a Germany of the Right, "once more in possession of the means to conduct a German foreign policy", would look East or West. Conversely it is the question of what, in this case, the USSR would do.

The interest of the work is enhanced by the new sources on which it is based. The Seeckt papers, the German military archives and Sontag's Stresemann material are unexplored land to the historian. But one regrets that W. Pieck's *Reden und Aufsätze*, O. Grotewohl's *Im Kampf um Deutschland*, E. Thaelmann's *Kampffreden*, W. Ulbricht's writings, or *Die Deutsch-Russischen Handelsbeziehungen* by Kuczynski and Wittkowski, have not been drawn on. Instead, too much reliance is placed on *post factum* allegations by such

\*GERMAN-SOVIET RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO WORLD WARS, 1919-1939. By E. H. Carr. (Oxford University Press, 18/-.)



grinders of their own axes as Trotsky or Ruth Fischer, while Radek's *Recollections* exaggerate his personal role and gloss over his errors.

Prof. Carr is too practised a writer not to be aware of the clinical treatment required for assertions so vitriolic and self-exculpating as those from the two former. Hence it is surprising to find, in his analysis, statements such as the following: "reformism" . . . meant nothing to Russia" (p. 32). In fact, vols. XVIII-XXI (Eng. Edit.) of Lenin's *Collected Works* give ample evidence of his and Stalin's struggles to win the Russian masses over to Bolshevism. "The policy of 'Socialism in one Country' was not heard of before 1924" (p. 70), says Prof. Carr, whereas its theoretical foundations were already laid by Lenin during World War I, and it was first applied in practice in the Trade Treaty with Britain in 1921. He says: "Moscow, by encouraging the German Communist Party in its intransigent behaviour towards the Social-Democrats, helped Hitler to power . . . for which the German Communists . . . bear the main share of guilt" (p. 106). Yet Arthur Rosenberg's *History of the German Republic*, referred to approvingly by Prof. Carr, reveals how the KPD's repeated offers for joint action were fatally repelled by the SPD. The charge that "the prescriptions offered to the German Communist Party by the Bolsheviks were so often inappropriate . . ." (p. 33) sounds like a *bona fide* echo of those who, for their own reasons, wish to foist on the USSR responsibility for the defeat of the German Left. And one might legitimately query whether "belief . . . in a parallelism between revolutions in different countries was inherent in Marxism" (p. 31).

These points, however, do not affect the main thesis of the book. There is no doubt why the rulers of the Reich went to Rapallo in 1922. Prof. Carr quotes Brockdorff-Rantzau's biographer: "The evil of Versailles can be corrected from Moscow." The reason why, seventeen years later, Ribbentrop was sent to Stalin, was to avoid fighting on two fronts. On both occasions, German imperialism followed Frederick II's and Bismarck's precept to bluff and bludgeon the West by treating with the East. But Soviet diplomacy pursued basically different motives. The 1922 Agreement with Germany was a breach in the ring of isolation forced by the West on Soviet Russia (see p. 61 and 65). It was concluded because the earlier Trade Treaty with Britain—the priority is not without significance—failed to yield the expected political results. As for 1939, Prof. Carr reminds us forcibly both of the utmost hesitation with which the Soviet Government approached the Non-Aggression Pact with Hitler (pp. 125, 130, 132-4), and of the tragic failure of their efforts for collective security (pp. 115-6, 124). As late as August 3, 1939, the German Ambassa-

dor in Moscow had to report home that "the Soviet Government is at present determined to sign with England and France . . ." (p. 133).

It was due to the West that the USSR and capitalist Germany twice came together (pp. 122, 124, 132-6), not to Soviet preference for the latter. A Socialist State can have no preference for any of the imperialist powers. Prof. Carr cites a *Pravda* editorial during the Munich crisis: "The Soviet Union . . . sees no difference between the German and English robbers", and from Lenin in December 1922: "Our foreign policy, so long as we are alone and the capitalist world is strong . . . consists in our being obliged to utilise [its] disagreements. . . . Our existence depends . . . on the existence of a radical split in the camp of the imperialist powers. . . . The German bourgeois government madly hates the Bolsheviks, but the interests of the international situation are pushing it towards peace with Soviet Russia." In the early twenties, as Prof. Carr says, "the one effective division in the capitalist world was between the victorious Allies and defeated Germany . . . since the friendship of the Allies was not to be had at any price, [reviewer's italics] friendship with Germany . . . was the one available alternative" (p. 81). In 1939, "the essential aim of Soviet foreign policy . . . was to avoid isolation . . . If the western alliance could not be achieved, [reviewer's italics], then let Hitler . . . strike west, and . . . if Soviet Russia had eventually to fight Hitler, the western powers would already be involved, and could no longer escape by shifting the brunt of the attack on to Russia . . ." (p. 136). The Soviet Treaties with Germany of 1922 and 1939 were made in Britain, France and America.

Prof. Carr's question, then, concerning "a potential alliance between German Nationalism and Russian Bolshevism" (pp. 23, 137) evokes this answer: what will the West do? Will it go on fostering the hydra of "German Nationalism" with everything this is certain to entail again, or will it halt and build world peace with the USSR?

To lead up to this conclusion, at least by implication, is one of the merits of this absorbing book.

W.G.

#### THE MIXTURE AS BEFORE

M. T. FLORINSKY'S book\* is a revised edition of that of 1939. "Although [he says] much water has flowed under the bridge since that date . . . it proved unnecessary to alter any of my major conclusions." For him, there had been no Soviet victory over Nazism. The post-war flowering of life under Socialism is a myth. The water under the bridge of Florinsky's erudition has not become any clearer.

\*TOWARDS AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE USSR. By M. T. Florinsky. (Macmillan's, New York, 22/6.)

The author was educated in Kiev, London and Oxford, holds several academic degrees, and is now Professor at Columbia. He has accumulated many facts on "Government, Politics and Economic Planning" in the USSR, and has appended a big bibliography, including Soviet material. But what use is there in a learning which covers every item discussed with palls of prejudice? What is one to make of his Olympian comment on "Stalin's perhaps not very fortunate venture into theoretical analysis" (p. 19), the blithe belief in "the avowed apathy of organised labour" (p. 142), the bold assertion that "the social security programme is singularly unimpressive" (p. 184), the soothing thought that "the triumph of revolution in Russia and its subsequent course demonstrate the fallibility of the Marxian prognosis" (p. 201), or the bland accusation that the new People's Democracies are "the result not of the inner contradictions within the capitalist societies of Rumania, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, *et al*, but of the relentless pressure of the Red Army" (p. 202)? Has Florinsky, to take but the last point, heard of Prof. H. Seton-Watson, who—despite his furious opposition to Communism—was objective enough to give a different picture in his *Eastern Europe Between the Wars*? Has he read Prof. Carr or the Webbs? On what scientific grounds does he quarrel with Maurice Dobb? Had he brought himself to study Soviet sources, instead of dismissing works such as *The History of Diplomacy* as "a third-rate text-book" (p. 190), he might have been more careful with opinions such as that the German 1941 invasion was "unforeseen" (p. 207), or that "the Soviet system is . . . a godless theocracy governed by an order whose members are bound together by . . . personal interests" (p. 208).

The purpose of re-issuing this "standard work" could only have been to put the worst of current propaganda into a "scholarly" garb. It justifies none of the favourable comments quoted on the jacket, and least of all its own title.

W.G.

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## BRIEF NOTICES

SCIENCE NEWS 24 (*Penguin Books*, 2/-). *Hydro-Electric and Irrigation Development in the USSR*. By A. W. Haslett. A brief factual account of the construction works, by the editor of *Science News*. 19 illustrations. Some interesting comparisons with irrigation systems in India and Pakistan. We warmly welcome this presentation of the great schemes to a wide public.

CRANES FLYING SOUTH. By N. Karazin. (*Longman's*, 3/6.) This minor Soviet classic is now available in the *Heritage of Literature Series*, specially intended for schools.

THREE PLAYS: The Cherry Orchard: Three Sisters: Ivanov. By Anton Chekhov. (*Penguin Classics*, 2/6.) It is agreeable to see these made available cheaply in a single volume; but the introduction, in its "infinitely sad" and "utterly depressing" conclusions, is conventionally false and becomes finally merely ridiculous.

## PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

MIRROR TO RUSSIA. Marie Noële Kelly. (*Country Life*, 21/-.)

MOMENT OF DECISION. S. B. Hough. (*Hodder & Stoughton*, 10/6.)

MY FRIEND VASSIA. J. Rounault. (*Hart-Davis*, 15/-.)

RUSSIAN STRESSED TEXTS, No. 1: AIR. (*Pitman*, 4/6.)

SOVIET DOCUMENTS ON FOREIGN POLICY, Vol. 2. Ed. J. Degras. (*O.U.P.*, 45/-.)

THE BADGERS. L. Leonov. (*Russia Today Book Club*, 3/-.)

THE JEWS IN RUSSIA. Vols. 1 and 2. L. Greenberg. (*Yale U.P. and Cumberland*, \$4.00 or 20/- each vol.)

THE SOVIET AIR FORCE. Asher Lee. Revised Edition. (*Duckworth*, 10/6.)

IN THE NAME OF PEACE. A. Johnstone. (*FLPH*, unpriced.)

THE PROGRESS OF SOVIET SCIENCE. S. I. Vavilov. (*Collet's/FLPH*, 6d.)

THE SOVIET UNION AND THE UNITY OF GERMANY AND THE GERMAN PEACE TREATY. [Documents.] (*Collet's/MFA*, 6d.)

VYSHINSKY AT UNO. (*Soviet News*, 1d.)

MASSES & MAINSTREAM. March, April, May 1952. (*New Century*, 35c. each.)

POLITICAL AFFAIRS. March, April 1952. (*New Century*, 25c. each.)

SOVIET STUDIES, III, 4, April 1952. (*Blackwell*, 9/-.)

# SCR NOTES

## London Meetings and other events March—June 1952

(All at 14 Kensington Square unless otherwise stated)

### MARCH

- 10th: *Exhibition of Soviet Children's Toys, Books and Paintings*. Opening by Dame Sybil Thorndike. College of Preceptors, W.C.1. (**Education Section.**)  
*Soviet Architecture Today*. F. W. B. Charles. School of Planning, W.C.1. (**Architecture Group.**)
- 13th: *The Soviet Cinema and the Child*. Ivor Montagu. Chair: Beatrice King. (At the **Education Section's** Exhibition.)
- 14th: *Tape-recital of Soviet recordings*. Beethoven. Violin Concerto; Peyko, Moldavian Suite; Bunin, 2nd Symphony. (**Music Section.**)
- 18th: *Out-of-school Activities in the USSR*. Deana Levin. Chair: Lady Simon of Wythenshawe. (At the **Education Section's** Exhibition.)
- 26th: *Some Impressions of Soviet Children Today*. Mrs. M. M. Martin and Maurice Abbey. (**Education Section.**)
- 28th: *Tape-recital of Soviet recordings*. Beethoven, 1st Symphony; Mozart, Flute and Harp Concerto; Haydn, 45th Symphony. (**Music Section.**)

### APRIL

- 1st: Discussion on V. Popov's novel *Steel and Slag*. (**Writers' Group.**)
- 5th: *Soviet Asia*. Dr. H. Joules, Prof. H. Levy, Dr. S. M. Manton, FRS, Andrew Rothstein. Chair: Gordon Sandison. Films of Soviet Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan. Beaver Hall, E.C.4.
- 16th: *Simultaneous Chess Display*. David Bronstein and Mark Taimonov. 20 Pont Street, S.W.1. Followed by reception at 14 Kensington Square. (**Chess Section.**)
- 17th: *Inaugural Meeting of SCR Medical Section*. Film: They See Again. Hammer Theatre, W.1.
- 21st: *Tape-recital of Soviet recordings*. Chamber music by Kabalevsky, Myaskovsky and Taneiev. (**Music Section.**)
- 23rd: *Vecherinka* (Russian Evening).
- 30th: *Gogol Centenary Meeting*. James Aldridge, Compton Mackenzie. Chair: Prof. C. L. Wrenn. Readings by Peter Copley and Catherine Salkeld. Film of extracts from *Dead Souls* by Moscow Art Theatre. Film House, W.1. (**Writers' Group.**)

### MAY

- 2nd: *The Fundamental Basis of Pavlovian Teaching*. Prof. V. S. Russinov (Moscow). Chair: A. W. L. Kessel. (**Medical Section.**)
- 6th: Discussion on *The Road to Life* (A. Makarenko). Opened by G. Hobbs and Edwin Payne. Chair: Eric Hartley. (**Writers' Group** and **Education Section.**)
- 18th: *Readings from Gogol*. Produced by Derek Birch, Donald Bisset and Max Brent. (**Theatre Section.**)
- 21st: *Vecherinka* (Russian Evening).
- 26th: Informal audition of recent disk and tape recordings. (**Music Section..**)
- 28th: Film show: *Moscow Constructions; The Transformation of Nature*. Crown Theatre, W.1. (**Architecture Group.**)
- 30th: Film: *Grand Concert*. Film House, W.1. (**Film and Theatre Sections.**)

### JUNE

- 18th: *East-West Trade*. Reports by delegates to the *World Economic Conference*. Conway Hall, W.C.1. (**Social Sciences Section.**)
- 21st: *Midsummer Eve Party*.
- 30th: Informal audition of recent recordings. (**Music Section.**)

## ***Man Conquers Nature***

Text of six speeches at the SCR symposium—on January 13, 1952, at the Battersea Town Hall—on the great new Soviet construction schemes, covering economic, agricultural, nutritional, biological, and social aspects and implications of these afforestation-irrigation-electrification works which are wholly transforming the climate, landscape and economy of an area larger than Europe.

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